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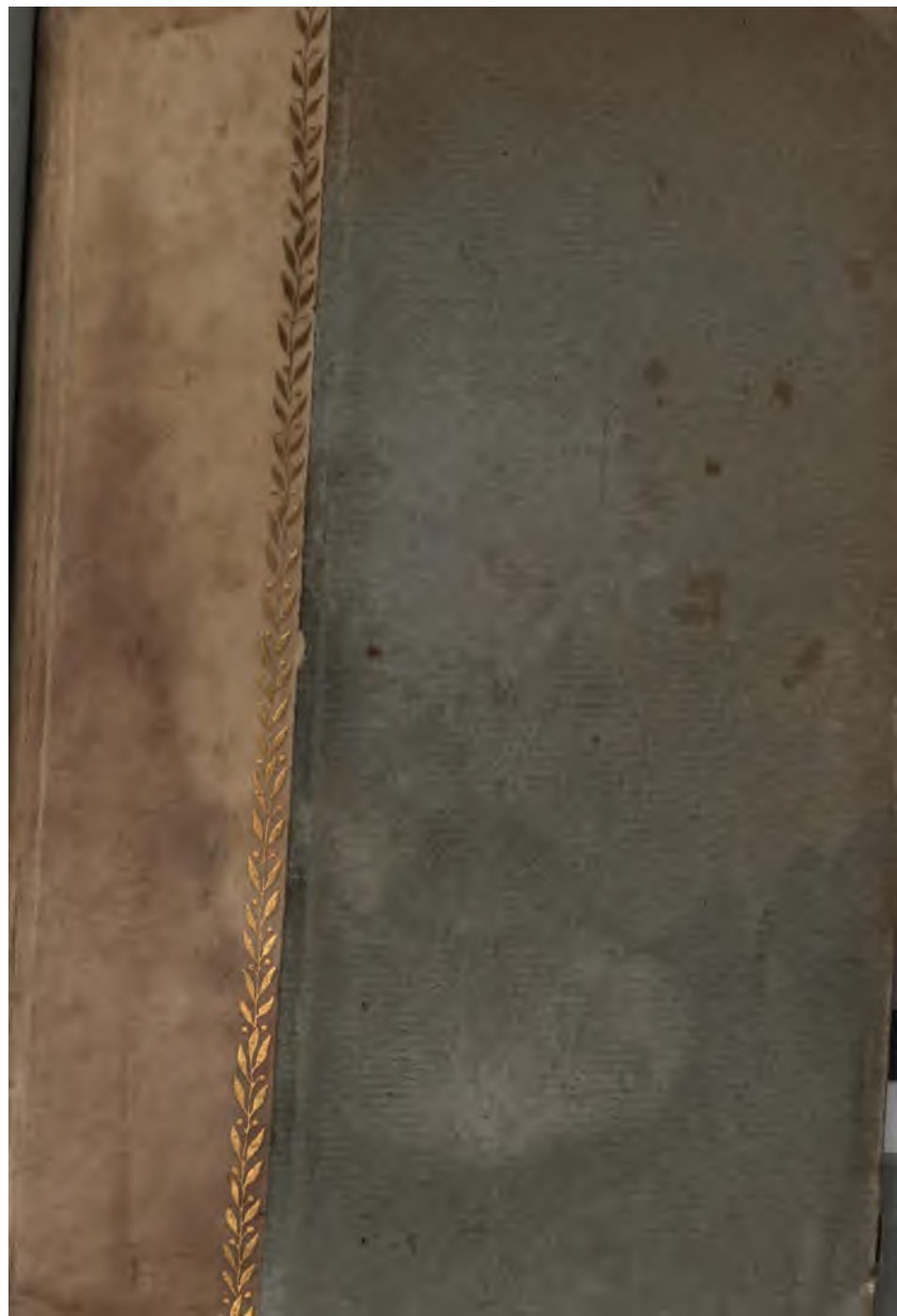
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FITZGERALD'S.
OMAR KHAYYÁM
IN VERSE

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OMAR KHAYYÁM
IN VERSE



TOMB OF OMAR KHAYYAM.

● ● RUBÁIYÁT OF
OMAR KHAYYÁM ● ●

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IN ENGLISH VERSE

EDWARD FITZGERALD

THE TEXT OF THE FOURTH EDITION,*FOLLOWED BY THAT OF THE FIRST;
WITH NOTES SHOWING THE EXTENT OF HIS INDEBTEDNESS
TO THE PERSIAN ORIGINAL;

AND

A BIOGRAPHICAL PREFACE

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BIOGRAPHICAL PREFACE.

EDWARD FITZGERALD, whom the world has already learned, in spite of his own efforts to remain within the shadow of anonymity, to look upon as one of the rarest poets of the century, was born at Bredfield, in Suffolk, on the 31st March, 1809. He was the third son of John Purcell, of Kilkenny, in Ireland, who, marrying Miss Mary Frances Fitzgerald, daughter of John Fitzgerald, of Williamstown, County Waterford, added that distinguished name to his own patronymic; and the future Omar was thus doubly of Irish extraction. (Both the families of Purcell and Fitzgerald claim descent from Norman warriors of the eleventh century.) This circumstance is thought to have had some influence in attracting him to the study of Persian poetry, Iran and Erin being almost convertible terms in the early days of modern ethnology. After some years of primary education at the grammar school of Bury St. Edmunds, he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1826, and

there formed acquaintance with several young men of great abilities, most of whom rose to distinction before him, but never ceased to regard with affectionate remembrance the quiet and amiable associate of their college-days. Amongst them were Alfred Tennyson, James Spedding, William Bodham Donne, John Mitchell Kemble, and William Makepeace Thackeray; and their long friendship has been touchingly referred to by the Laureate in dedicating his last poem to the memory of Edward Fitzgerald. "Euphranor," our author's earliest printed work, affords a curious picture of his academic life and associations. Its substantial reality is evident beneath the thin disguise of the symbolical or classical names which he gives to the personages of the colloquy; and the speeches which he puts into his own mouth are full of the humorous gravity, the whimsical and kindly philosophy, which remained his distinguishing characteristics till the end. This book was first published in 1851; a second and a third edition were printed some years later; all anonymous, and each of the latter two differing from its predecessor by changes in the text which were not indicated on the title-pages.

"Euphranor" furnishes a good many characterizations which would be useful for any writer treating upon Cambridge society in the third decade of

this century. Kenelm Digby, the author of the "Broadstone of Honour," had left Cambridge before the time when Euphranor held his "dialogue," but he is picturesquely recollected as "a grand swarthy fellow who might have stepped out of the canvas of some knightly portrait in his father's hall — perhaps the living image of one sleeping under some cross-legged *effigies* in the church." In "Euphranor," it is easy to discover the earliest phase of the unconquerable attachment which Fitzgerald entertained for his college and his life-long friends, and which induced him in later days to make frequent visits to Cambridge, renewing and refreshing the old ties of custom and friendship. In fact, his disposition was affectionate to a fault, and he betrayed his consciousness of weakness in that respect by referring playfully at times to "a certain natural lubricity" which he attributed to the Irish character, and professed to discover especially in himself. This amiability of temper endeared him to many friends of totally dissimilar tastes and qualities; and, by enlarging his sympathies, enabled him to enjoy the fructifying influence of studies pursued in communion with scholars more profound than himself, but less gifted with the power of expression. One of the younger Cambridge men with whom he became intimate during

his periodical pilgrimages to the university, was Edward B. Cowell, a man of the highest attainment in Oriental learning, who resembled Fitzgerald himself in the possession of a warm and genial heart, and the most unobtrusive modesty. From Cowell he could easily learn that the hypothetical affinity between the names of Erin and Iran belonged to an obsolete stage of etymology; but the attraction of a far-fetched theory was replaced by the charm of reading Persian poetry in companionship with his young friend who was equally competent to enjoy and to analyse the beauties of a literature that formed a portion of his regular studies. They read together the poetical remains of Khayyám—a choice of reading which sufficiently indicates the depth and range of Mr. Cowell's knowledge. Omar Khayyám, although not quite forgotten, enjoyed in the history of Persian literature a celebrity like that of Occleve and Gower in our own. In the many *Tazkirât* (memoirs or memorials) of Poets, he was mentioned and quoted with esteem; but his poems, labouring as they did under the original sin of heresy and atheism, were seldom looked at, and from lack of demand on the part of readers, had become rarer than those of most other writers since the days of Firdausi. European scholars knew little of his works beyond his Arabic

treatise on Algebra, and Mr. Cowell may be said to have disentombed his poems from oblivion. Now, thanks to the fine taste of that scholar, and to the transmuting genius of Fitzgerald, no Persian poet is so well known in the western world as Abu'l-fat'h 'Omar son of Ibrahim the Tentmaker of Naishápúr, whose manhood synchronises with the Norman conquest of England, and who took for his poetic name (*takhallus*) the designation of his father's trade (*Khayyám*). The *Rubá'iyát* (Quatrains) do not compose a single poem divided into a certain number of stanzas; there is no continuity of plan in them, and each stanza is a distinct thought expressed in musical verse. There is no other element of unity in them than the general tendency of the Epicurean idea, and the arbitrary divan form by which they are grouped according to the alphabetical arrangement of the final letters; those in which the rhymes end in *a* constituting the first division, those with *b* the second, and so on. The peculiar attitude towards religion and the old questions of fate, immortality, the origin and the destiny of man, which educated thinkers have assumed in the present age of Christendom, is found admirably foreshadowed in the fantastic verses of Khayyám, who was no more of a Mohammedan than many of our best writers are Christians. His

philosophical and Horatian fancies—graced as they are by the charms of a lyrical expression equal to that of Horace, and a vivid brilliance of imagination to which the Roman poet could make no claim—exercised a powerful influence upon Fitzgerald's mind, and coloured his thoughts to such a degree that even when he oversteps the largest licence allowed to a translator, his phrases reproduce the spirit and manner of his original with a nearer approach to perfection than would appear possible. It is usually supposed that there is more of Fitzgerald than of Khayyám in the English *Rubá'iyát*, and that the old Persian simply afforded themes for the Anglo-Irishman's display of poetic power; but nothing could be further from the truth. The French translator, J. B. Nicolas, and the English one, Mr. Whinfield, supply a closer mechanical reflection of the sense in each separate stanza; but Mr. Fitzgerald has, in some instances, given a version equally close and exact; in others, rejoined scattered phrases from more than one stanza of his original, and thus accomplished a feat of marvellous poetical transfusion. He frequently turns literally into English the strange outlandish imagery which Mr. Whinfield thought necessary to replace by more intelligible banalities, and in this way the magic of his genius has successfully transplanted

into the garden of English poësy exotics that bloom like native flowers.

One of Mr. Fitzgerald's Woodbridge friends was Bernard Barton, the Quaker poet, with whom he maintained for many years the most intimate and cordial intercourse, and whose daughter Lucy he married. He wrote the memoir of his friend's life which appeared in the posthumous volume of Barton's poems. The story of his married life was a short one. With all the overflowing amiability of his nature, there were mingled certain peculiarities or waywardnesses which were more suitable to the freedom of celibacy than to the staidness of matrimonial life. A separation took place by mutual agreement, and Fitzgerald behaved in this circumstance with the generosity and unselfishness which were apparent in all his whims no less than in his more deliberate actions. Indeed, his entire career was marked by an unchanging goodness of heart and a genial kindliness; and no one could complain of having ever endured hurt or ill-treatment at his hands. His pleasures were innocent and simple. Amongst the more delightful, he counted the short coasting trips, occupying no more than a day or two at a time, which he used to make in his own yacht from Lowestoft, accompanied only by a crew of two men, and such a friend as Cowell, with a

large pasty and a few bottles of wine to supply their material wants. It is needless to say that books were also put into the cabin, and that the symposia of the friends were thus brightened by communion with the minds of the great departed. Fitzgerald's enjoyment of gnomie wisdom enshrined in words of exquisite propriety was evinced by the frequency with which he used to read Montaigne's essays and Madame de Sévigné's letters, and the various works from which he extracted and published his collection of wise saws entitled "*Polonius*." This taste was allied to a love for what was classical and correct in literature, by which he was also enabled to appreciate the prim and formal muse of Crabbe, in whose grandson's house he died.

His second printed work was the "*Polonius*," already referred to, which appeared in 1852. It exemplifies his favourite reading, being a collection of extracts, sometimes short proverbial phrases, sometimes longer pieces of characterization or reflection, arranged under abstract headings. He occasionally quotes Dr. Johnson, for whom he entertained sincere admiration; but the ponderous and artificial fabric of Johnsonese did not please him like the language of Bacon, Fuller, Sir Thomas Browne, Coleridge, whom he cites frequently. A disproportionate abundance of wise words was

drawn from Carlyle; his original views, his forcible sense, and the friendship with which Fitzgerald regarded him, having apparently blinded the latter to the ungainly style and ungraceful mannerisms of the Chelsea sage. (It was Thackeray who first made them personally acquainted forty years ago; and Fitzgerald remained always loyal to his first instincts of affection and admiration.*) Polonius also marks the period of his earliest attention to Persian studies, as he quotes in it the great Sufi poet Jalál-ud-dín-Rúmi, whose *masnavi* has lately been translated into English by Mr. Redhouse, but whom Fitzgerald can only have seen in the original. He, however, spells the name *Jallaladin*, an incorrect form of which he could not have been guilty at the time when he produced Omar Khayyám, and which thus betrays that he had not long been engaged with Irani literature.

* The close relation that subsisted between Fitzgerald and Carlyle has lately been made patent by an article in the *Historical Review* upon the Squire papers,—those celebrated documents purporting to be contemporary records of Cromwell's time,—which were accepted by Carlyle as genuine, but which other scholars have asserted from internal evidence to be modern forgeries. However the question may be decided, the fact which concerns us here is that our poet was the negotiator between Mr. Squire and Carlyle, and that his correspondence with the latter upon the subject reveals the intimate nature of their acquaintance.

He was very fond of Montaigne's essays, and of Pascal's *Pensées*; but his *Polonius* reveals a sort of dislike and contempt for Voltaire. Amongst the Germans, Jean Paul, Goethe, Alexander von Humboldt, and August Wilhelm von Schlegel attracted him greatly; but he seems to have read little German, and probably only quoted translations. His favourite motto was "Plain Living and High Thinking," and he expresses great reverence for all things manly, simple, and true. The laws and institutions of England were, in his eyes, of the highest value and sacredness; and whatever Irish sympathies he had would never have diverted his affections from the Union to Home Rule. This is strongly illustrated by some original lines of blank verse at the end of *Polonius*, annexed to his quotation, under "*Æsthetics*," of the words in which Lord Palmerston eulogised Mr. Gladstone for having devoted his Neapolitan tour to an inspection of the prisons.

Fitzgerald's next printed work was a translation of *Six Dramas of Calderon*, published in 1853, which was unfavourably received at the time, and consequently withdrawn by him from circulation. His name appeared on the title-page,—a concession to publicity which was so unusual with him that it must have been made under strong pressure from

his friends. The book is in nervous blank verse, a mode of composition which he handled with great ease and skill. There is no waste of power in diffuseness and no employment of unnecessary epithets. It gives the impression of a work of the Shakespearean age, and reveals a kindred felicity, strength, and directness of language. It deserves to rank with his best efforts in poetry, but its ill-success made him feel that the publication of his name was an unfavourable experiment, and he never again repeated it. His great modesty, however, would sufficiently account for this shyness. Of "Omar Khayyám," even after the little book had won its way to general esteem, he used to say that the suggested addition of his name on the title would imply an assumption of importance which he considered that his "transmogrification" of the Persian poet did not possess.

Fitzgerald's conception of a translator's privilege is well set forth in the prefaces of his versions from Calderon, and the Agamemnon of Æschylus. He maintained that, in the absence of the perfect poet, who shall re-create in his own language the body and soul of his original, the best system is that of a paraphrase conserving the spirit of the author,—a sort of literary metempsychosis. Calderon, Æschylus, and Omar Khayyám were all treated with

equal licence, so far as form is concerned,—the last, perhaps, the most arbitrarily; but the result is not unsatisfactory as having given us perfect English poems instinct with the true flavour of their prototypes. The Persian was probably somewhat more Horatian and less melancholy, the Greek a little less florid and mystic, the Spaniard more lyrical and fluent, than their metaphrast has made them; but the essential spirit has not escaped in transfusion. Only a man of singular gifts could have performed the achievement, and these works attest Mr. Fitzgerald's right to rank amongst the finest poets of the century. About the same time as he printed his Calderon, another set of translations from the same dramatist was published by the late D. F. MacCarthy; a scholar whose acquaintance with Castilian literature was much deeper than Mr. Fitzgerald's, and who also possessed poetical abilities of no mean order, with a totally different sense of the translator's duty. The popularity of MacCarthy's versions has been considerable, and as an equivalent rendering of the original in sense and form his work is valuable. Spaniards familiar with the English language rate its merit highly; but there can be little question of the very great superiority of Mr. Fitzgerald's work as a contribution to English literature. It is

indeed only from this point of view that we should regard all the literary labours of our author. They are English poetical work of fine quality, dashed with a pleasant outlandish flavour which heightens their charm; and it is as English poems, not as translations, that they have endeared themselves even more to the American English than to the mixed Britons of England.

It was an occasion of no small moment to Mr. Fitzgerald's fame, and to the intellectual gratification of many thousands of readers, when he took his little packet of *Rubâ'iyyât* to Mr. Quaritch in the latter part of the year 1858. It was printed as a small quarto pamphlet, bearing the publisher's name but not the author's; and although apparently a complete failure at first,—a failure which Mr. Fitzgerald regretted less on his own account than on that of his publisher, to whom he had generously made a present of the book,—received, nevertheless, a sufficient distribution by being quickly reduced from the price of five shillings and placed in the box of cheap books marked a penny each. Thus forced into circulation, the two hundred copies which had been printed were soon exhausted. Among the buyers were Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Mr. Swinburne, Captain (now Sir Richard) Burton, and Mr. William Simpson, the accomplished

artist of the *Illustrated London News*. The influence exercised by the first three, especially by Rossetti, upon a clique of young men who have since grown to distinction, was sufficient to attract observation to the singular beauties of the poem anonymously translated from the Persian. Most readers had no possible opportunity of discovering whether it was a disguised original or an actual translation;—even Captain Burton enjoyed probably but little chance of seeing a manuscript of the Persian Rubá'íyyát. The Oriental imagery and allusions were too thickly scattered throughout the verses to favour the notion that they could be the original work of an Englishman; yet it was shrewdly suspected by most of the appreciative readers that the “translator” was substantially the author and creator of the poem. In the refuge of his anonymity, Fitzgerald derived an innocent gratification from the curiosity that was aroused on all sides. After the first edition had disappeared, inquiries for the little book became frequent, and in the year 1868 he gave the MS. of his second edition to Mr. Quaritch, and the Rubá'íyyát came into circulation once more, but with several alterations and additions by which the number of stanzas was somewhat increased beyond the original seventy-five. Most of the changes were, as might have

been expected, improvements; but in some instances the author's taste or caprice was at fault,—notably in the first *Rubá'iy*. His fastidious desire to avoid anything that seemed *baroque* or unnatural, or appeared like plagiarism, may have influenced him; but it was probably because he had already used the idea in his rendering of Jámí's *Salámán*, that he sacrificed a fine and novel piece of imagery in his first stanza and replaced it by one of much more ordinary character. If it were from a dislike to pervert his original too largely, he had no need to be so scrupulous, since he dealt on the whole with the *Rubá'iyyát* as though he had the licence of absolute authorship, changing, transposing, and manipulating the substance of the Persian quatrains with singular freedom. The vogue of "old Omar" (as he would affectionately call his work) went on increasing, and American readers took it up with eagerness. In those days, the mere mention of Omar Khayyám between two strangers meeting fortuitously acted like a sign of freemasonry and established frequently a bond of friendship. Some curious instances of this have been related. A remarkable feature of the Omar-cult in the United States was the circumstance that single individuals bought numbers of copies for gratuitous distribution before the book was re-

printed in America. Its editions have been relatively numerous, when we consider how restricted was the circle of readers who could understand the peculiar beauties of the work. A third edition appeared in 1872, with some further alterations, and may be regarded as virtually the author's final revision, for it hardly differs at all from the text of the fourth edition, which appeared in 1879. This last formed the first portion of a volume entitled "Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám; and the Salámán and Absál of Jámí; rendered into English verse." The Salámán (which had already been printed in separate form in 1856) is a poem chiefly in blank verse, interspersed with various metres (although it is all in one measure in the original) embodying a love-story of mystic significance; for Jámí was, unlike Omar Khayyám, a true Sufi, and indeed differed in other respects, his celebrity as a pious Mussulman doctor being equal to his fame as a poet. He lived in the fifteenth century, in a period of literary brilliance and decay; and the rich exuberance of his poetry, full of far-fetched conceits, involved expressions, overstrained imagery, and false taste, offers a strong contrast to the simpler and more forcible language of Khayyám. There is little use of Arabic in the earlier poet; he preferred the vernacular speech to the mongrel

language which was fashionable among the heirs of the Saracen conquerors; but Jámí's composition is largely embroidered with Arabic.

Mr. Fitzgerald had from his early days been thrown into contact with the Crabbe family; the Reverend George Crabbe (the poet's grandson) was an intimate friend of his, and it was on a visit to Morton Rectory that Fitzgerald died. As we know that friendship has power to warp the judgment, we shall not probably be wrong in supposing that his enthusiastic admiration for Crabbe's poems was not the product of sound, impartial criticism. He attempted to reintroduce them to the world by publishing a little volume of "Readings from Crabbe," produced in the last year of his life, but without success. A different fate awaited his "Agamemnon: a tragedy taken from Æschylus," which was first printed privately by him, and afterwards published with alterations in 1876. It is a very free rendering from the Greek, and full of a poetical beauty which is but partly assignable to Æschylus. Without attaining to anything like the celebrity and admiration which have followed Omar Khayyám, the Agamemnon has achieved much more than a *succès d'estime*. Mr. Fitzgerald's renderings from the Greek were not confined to this one essay; he also translated the two Œdipus dramas of Soph-

ocles, but left them unfinished in manuscript till Prof. Eliot Norton had a sight of them about seven or eight years ago and urged him to complete his work. When this was done, he had them set in type, but only a very few proofs can have been struck off, as it seems that, at least in England, no more than one or two copies were sent out by the author. In a similar way he printed translations of two of Calderon's plays not included in the published "Six Dramas"—namely, *La Vida es Sueño*, and *El Magico Prodigioso*, (both ranking among the Spaniard's finest work;) but they also were withheld from the public and all but half a dozen friends.

When his old boatman died, about ten years ago, he abandoned his nautical exercises and gave up his yacht for ever. During the last few years of his life, he divided his time between Cambridge, Crabbe's house, and his own home at Little Grange, near Woodbridge, where he received occasional visits from friends and relatives.

This edition of the "Omar Khayyám" is a modest memorial of one of the most modest men who have enriched English literature with poetry of distinct and permanent value. His best epitaph is found in Tennyson's "Tiresias and other poems," published immediately after our author's quiet exit from life, in 1883, in the seventy-fifth year of his age.

M. K.

OMAR KHAYYÁM'S GRAVE.

IN reference to the allusion quoted from Nizami (on page 37) to Omar Khayyám's prophecy about his own grave, the following letter from Nishapur will have a considerable interest. The writer is a man of wide reputation as one of the travelling artists of the *Illustrated London News* :

NISHAPUR, 27th October, 1884.

DEAR MR. QUARITCH :

From the association of your name with that of Omar Khayam I feel sure that what I enclose in this letter will be acceptable. The rose-leaves I gathered to-day, growing beside the tomb of the poet at this place, and the seeds are from the same bushes on which the leaves grew.*

I suppose you are aware that I left early last month with Sir Peter Lumsden to accompany the Afghan Boundary Commission in my old capacity

* These seeds were handed over to Mr. Baker, of Kew Gardens, who planted them, and they have grown up successfully, but as yet they have not produced flowers.

as special artist for the *Illustrated London News*. We travelled by way of the Black Sea, Tiflis, Baku, and the Caspian, to Tehran; from that place we have been marching eastward for nearly a month now, and we reached Nishapur this morning.

For some days past, as we marched along, I have been making inquiries regarding Omar Khayam and Nishapur; I wanted to know if the house he lived in still existed, or if any spot was yet associated with his name. It would seem that the only recognised memorial now remaining of him is his tomb. Our Mehmandar, or "Guest-Conductor,"—while the Afghan Boundary Commission is on Persian territory it is the Guest of the Shah, and the Mehmandar is his representative, who sees that all our wants are attended to,—appears to be familiar with the poet's name, and says that his works are still read and admired. The Mehmandar said he knew the tomb, and promised to be our guide when we reached Nishapur. We have just made the pilgrimage to the spot; it is about two miles south of the present Nishapur; so we had to ride, and Sir Peter, who takes an interest in the matter, was one of the party. We found the ground nearly all the way covered with mounds, and the soil mixed with fragments of pottery, sure indications of former habitations. As we neared the tomb, long ridges of earth could be seen, which were no doubt the remains of the walls of the old city of Nishapur. To the east of the tomb is a large square mound of earth, which is supposed to be the site of the Ark,

or Citadel of the original city. As we rode along, the blue dome, which the Mehmandar had pointed out on the way as the tomb, had a very imposing appearance, and its importance improved as we neared it; this will be better understood by stating that city walls, houses, and almost all structures in that part of Persia, are built of mud. The blue dome, as well as its size, produced in my mind, as we went towards it, a great satisfaction; it was pleasing to think that the countrymen of Omar Khayam held him in such high estimation as to erect so fine a monument, as well as to preserve it, — this last being rarely done in the East, — to his memory. If the poet was so honoured in his own country, it was little to be wondered at that his fame should have spread so rapidly in the lands of the West. This I thought, but there was a slight disappointment in store for me. At last we reached the tomb, and found its general arrangements were on a plan I was familiar with in India; whoever has visited the Taj at Agra, or any of the large Mohammedan tombs of Hindostan, will easily understand the one at Nishapur. The monument stands in a space enclosed by a mud wall, and the ground in front is laid out as a garden, with walks. The tomb at Nishapur, with all its surroundings, is in a very rude condition; it never was a work which could claim merit for its architecture, and although it is kept so far in repair, it has still a very decayed and neglected appearance. Even the blue dome, which impressed me in the distance, I

found on getting near to it was in a ruinous state from large portions of the enamelled plaster having fallen off. Instead of the marble and the red stone of the Taj at Nishapur,—with the exception of some enamelled tiles producing a pattern round the base of the dome, and also in the spandrils of the door and windows,—there we find only bricks and plaster. The surrounding wall of the enclosure was of crumbling mud, and could be easily jumped over at any place. There is a rude entrance by which we went in and walked to the front of the tomb; all along I had been under the notion that the whole structure was the tomb of Omar Khayam; and now came the disenchantment. The place turned out to be an Imamzadah, or the tomb of the Son of an Imam. The Son of an Imam inherits his sanctity from his father, and his place of burial becomes a holy place where pilgrims go to pray. The blue dome is over the tomb of such a person, who may have been a brute of the worst kind,—that would not have affected his sanctity,—instead of the poet, whom we reverence for the qualities which belonged to himself. When we had ascended the platform, about three feet high, on which the tomb stood, the Mehmandar turned to the left, and in a recess formed by three arches and a very rude roof, which seemed to have been added to the corner of the Imamzadah, pointed to the tomb of Omar Khayam. The discovery of a "Poet's Corner" at Nishapur, naturally recalled Westminster Abbey to my mind and revived my

spirits from the depression produced by finding that the principal tomb was not that of the Poet. The monument over the tomb is an oblong mass of brick covered with plaster, and without ornament, — the plaster falling off in places; on this and on the plaster of the recess are innumerable scribblings in Persian character. Some were, no doubt, names, for the British John Smith has not an exclusive tendency in this respect; but many of them were continued through a number of lines, and I guessed they were poetry, and most probably quotations from the Rubaiyat. Although the "Poet's Corner" was in rather a dilapidated state, still it must have been repaired at no very distant date; and this shows that some attention has been paid to it, and that the people of Nishapur have not quite forgotten Omar Khayam.

The Imamzadah — this word, which means Son of an Imam, applies to the person buried as well as to the tomb — was Mohammed Marook, brother of the Imam Reza, whose tomb at Meshed is considered so sacred by the Shias; — the Imam Reza was the eighth Imam, and died in 818; this gives us an approximate date for his brother, and it is, if I mistake not, a couple of centuries before the time of Omar Khayam; and the Imamzadah — here I mean the building — would have been erected, most probably, about that number of years before the poet required his resting-place. Behind the Imamzadah is a Kubberstan, or "Region of Graves," and the raised platform in front of the tomb contains in its

rough pavement a good many small tomb-stones, shewing that people are buried there, and that the place had been in the past a general grave-yard. All this is owing to the hereditary sanctity which belongs to the Son of an Imam, and we are perhaps indebted to Mohammed Marook, no matter what his character may have been, for the preservation of the site of Omar Khayam's burial place; the preservation of the one necessarily preserved the other.

In front of the Imamzadah is the garden, with some very old and one or two large trees, but along the edge of the platform in front of Omar Khayam's tomb I found some rose bushes; it was too late in the season for the roses, but a few hips were still remaining, and one or two of these I secured, as well as the leaves,—some of which are here enclosed for you; I hope you will be able to grow them in England,—they will have an interest, as in all probability they are the particular kind of roses Omar Khayam was so fond of watching as he pondered and composed his verses.

It may be worth adding that there is also at Nishapur the tomb of another poet who lived about the same time as Omar Khayam,—his name was Ferid ed din Attar; according to Vambéry, he was "a great mystic and philosopher. He wrote a work called 'Mantik et Teyr, the Logic of Birds.' In this the feathered creatures are made to contend in a curious way on the causes of existence, and the Source of Truth. 'Hudhud,' the All-Know-

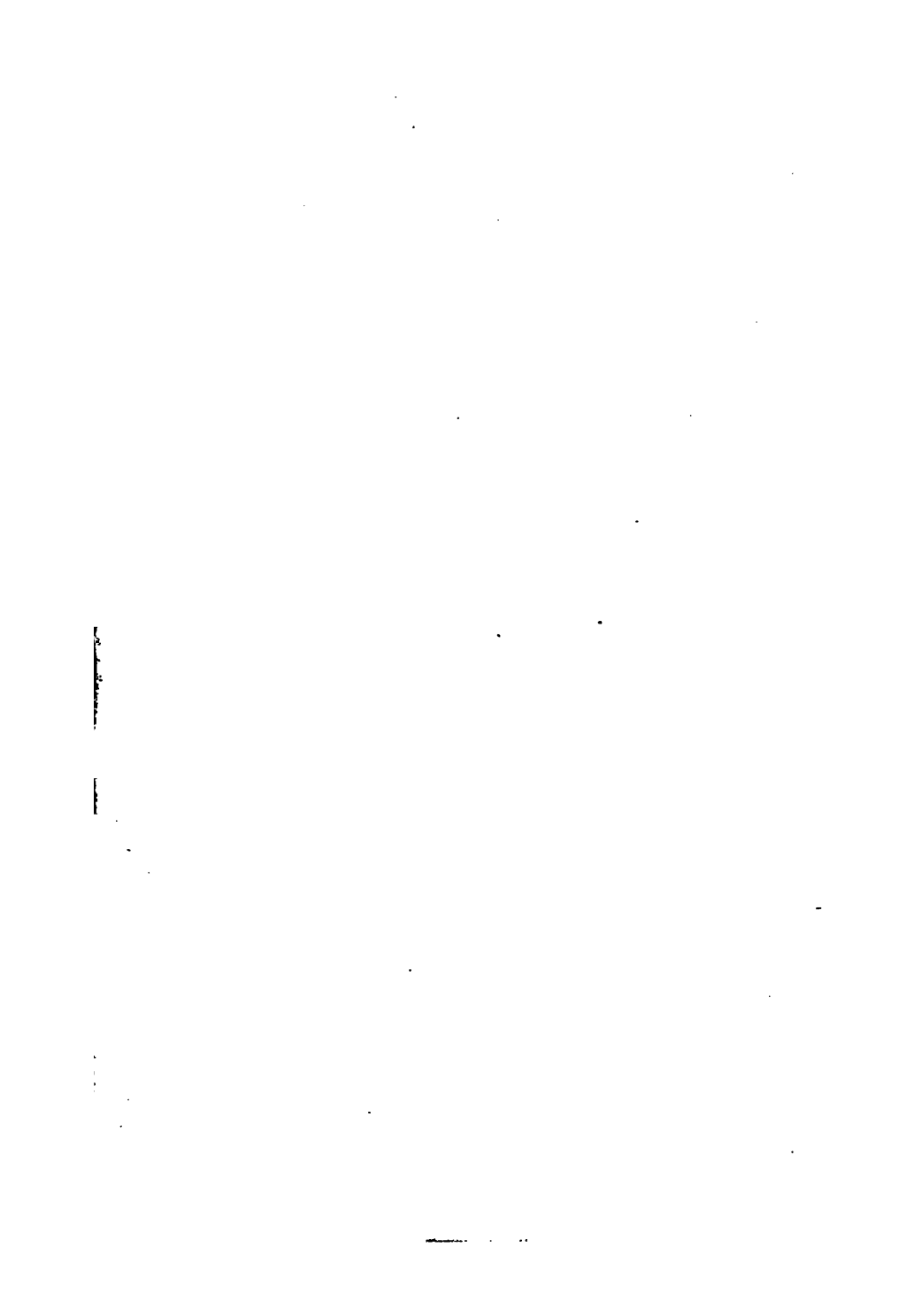
ing magical bird of Solomon, is introduced, as the Teacher of Birds; and also Šimurg, the Phoenix of the Orientals, and Symbol of the Highest Light." In this it is understood that the Birds represent humanity, Hudhud is the Prophet, and the Šimurg stands for Deity. This tomb I shall not have time to visit. Another three marches take us to Meshed, and then we shall be close to the Afghan frontier. I am sending a sketch of Omar Khayam's tomb to the *Illustrated London News*.

Believe me

Yours very truly,

WILLIAM SIMPSON.

(The sketch above referred to appears in the present volume as a frontispiece.)



OMAR KHAYYÁM,

THE ASTRONOMER-POET OF PERSIA.

(BY EDWARD FITZGERALD.)

OMAR KHAYYÁM was born at Naishápúr in Khorasan in the latter half of our Eleventh, and died within the First Quarter of our Twelfth Century. The slender Story of his Life is curiously twined about that of two other very considerable Figures in their Time and Country: one of whom tells the Story of all Three. This was Nizám ul Mulk, Vizyr to Alp Arslan the Son, and Malik Shah the Grandson, of Toghrul Beg the Tartar, who had wrested Persia from the feeble Successor of Mahmúd the Great, and founded that Seljukian Dynasty which finally roused Europe into the Crusades. This Nizám ul Mulk, in his *Wasiyat*—or *Testament*—which he wrote and left as a Memorial for future Statesmen—relates the following, as quoted in the *Calcutta Review*, No. 59, from Mirkhond's History of the Assassins:

“‘One of the greatest of the wise men of Kho-
‘rassan was the Imám Mowaffak of Naishápúr, a
‘man highly honoured and revered,— may God
‘rejoice his soul; his illustrious years exceeded
‘eighty-five, and it was the universal belief that
‘every boy who read the Koran or studied the tra-
‘ditions in his presence, would assuredly attain to
‘honour and happiness. For this cause did my
‘father send me from Tús to Naishápúr with
‘Abd-us-samad, the doctor of law, that I might
‘employ myself in study and learning under the
‘guidance of that illustrious teacher. Towards me
‘he ever turned an eye of favour and kindness,
‘and as his pupil I felt for him extreme affection
‘and devotion, so that I passed four years in his
‘service. When I first came there, I found two
‘other pupils of mine own age newly arrived,
‘Hakim Omar Khayyám, and the ill-fated Ben
‘Sabbáh. Both were endowed with sharpness of
‘wit and the highest natural powers; and we three
‘formed a close friendship together. When the
‘Imám rose from his lectures, they used to join me,
‘and we repeated to each other the lessons we had
‘heard. Now Omar was a native of Naishápúr,
‘while Hasan Ben Sabbáh’s father was one Ali, a
‘man of austere life and practice, but heretical in
‘his creed and doctrine. One day Hasan said to

‘me and to Khayyám, ‘It is a universal belief that
 ‘the pupils of the Imám Mowaffak will attain
 ‘to fortune. Now, even if we *all* do not attain
 ‘thereto, without doubt one of us will; what then
 ‘shall be our mutual pledge and bond?’ We
 ‘answered, ‘Be it what you please.’ ‘Well,’ he
 ‘said, ‘let us make a vow, that to whomsoever
 ‘this fortune falls, he shall share it equally with
 ‘the rest, and reserve no pre-eminence for himself.’
 ‘‘Be it so,’ we both replied, and on those terms we
 ‘mutually pledged our words. Years rolled on,
 ‘and I went from Khorassan to Transoxiana, and
 ‘wandered to Ghazni and Cabul; and when I
 ‘returned, I was invested with office, and rose to
 ‘be administrator of affairs during the Sultanate
 ‘of Sultan Alp Arslán.’

“He goes on to state, that years passed by,
 and both his old school-friends found him out,
 and came and claimed a share in his good fortune,
 according to the school-day vow. The Vizier was
 generous and kept his word. Hasan demanded a
 place in the government, which the Sultan granted
 at the Vizier’s request; but discontented with a
 gradual rise, he plunged into the maze of intrigue
 of an oriental court, and failing in a base attempt
 to supplant his benefactor, he was disgraced and
 fell. After many

mishaps and wanderings, Hasan became the head of the Persian sect of the *Ismailians*,—a party of fanatics who had long murmured in obscurity, but rose to an evil eminence under the guidance of his strong and evil will. In A. D. 1090, he seized the castle of Alamút, in the province of Rúdbar, which lies in the mountainous tract south of the Caspian Sea; and it was from this mountain home he obtained that evil celebrity among the Crusaders as the OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAINS, and spread terror through the Mohammedan world; and it is yet disputed whether the word *Assassin*, which they have left in the language of modern Europe as their dark memorial, is derived from the *hashish*, or opiate of hemp-leaves (the Indian *bhang*), with which they maddened themselves to the sullen pitch of oriental desperation, or from the name of the founder of the dynasty, whom we have seen in his quiet collegiate days at Naishápúr. One of the countless victims of the Assassin's dagger was Nizám-ul-Mulk himself, the old school-boy friend.¹

¹ Some of Omar's Rubáiyát warns us of the danger of Greatness, the instability of Fortune, and while advocating Charity to all Men, recommending us to be too intimate with none. Attár makes Nizám-ul-Mulk use the very words of his friend Omar [Rub. xxviii.], "When Nizám-ul-Mulk was in the Agony (of Death) he said, 'Oh God! I am passing away in the hand of the Wind.'"

"Omar Khayyám also came to the Vizier to claim the share; but not to ask for title or office. 'The greatest boon you can confer on me,' he said, 'is to let me live in a corner under the shadow of your fortune, to spread wide the advantages of Science, and pray for your long life and prosperity.' The Vizier tells us, that, when he found Omar was really sincere in his refusal, he pressed him no further, but granted him a yearly pension of 1200 *mithkáls* of gold, from the treasury of Naishápúr.

"At Naishápúr thus lived and died Omar Khayyám, 'busied,' adds the Vizier, 'in winning knowledge of every kind, and especially in Astronomy, wherein he attained to a very high pre-eminence. Under the Sultanate of Malik Shah, he came to Merv, and obtained great praise for his proficiency in science, and the Sultan showed favours upon him.'

"When Malik Shah determined to reform the calendar, Omar was one of the eight learned men employed to do it; the result was the *Jaldli* era (so called from *Jalal-ud-din*, one of the king's names) — 'a computation of time,' says Gibbon, 'which surpasses the Julian, and approaches the accuracy of the Gregorian style.' He is also the author of some astronomical tables, entitled *Zíji*-

Maliksháhi," and the French have lately republished and translated an Arabic Treatise of his on Algebra.

"His Takhallus or poetical name (Khayyám) signifies a Tent-maker, and he is said to have at one time exercised that trade, perhaps before Nizám-ul-Mulk's generosity raised him to independence. Many Persian poets similarly derived their names from their occupations; thus we have Attár, 'a druggist,' Assár, 'an oil presser,' &c.¹ Omar himself alludes to his name in the following whimsical lines:—

'Khayyám, who stitched the tents of science,
Has fallen in grief's furnace and been suddenly burned;
The shears of Fate have cut the tent ropes of his life,
And the broker of Hope has sold him for nothing!'

"We have only one more anecdote to give of his Life, and that relates to the close; it is told in the anonymous preface which is sometimes prefixed to his poems; it has been printed in the Persian in the appendix to Hyde's *Veterum Persarum Religio*, p. 529; and D'Herbelot alludes to it in his *Bibliothèque*, under *Khiam*:—²

¹ Though all these, like our Smiths, Archers, Millers, Fletchers, &c., may simply retain the Surname of an hereditary calling.

² "Philosophe Musulman qui a vécu en Odeur de Sainteté vers la Fin du premier et le Commencement du second Siècle," no part of which, except the "Philosophe," can apply to our Khayyám.

“‘It is written in the chronicles of the ancients
 ‘that this King of the Wise, Omar Khayyám, died
 ‘at Naishápúr in the year of the Hegira, 517 (A. D.
 ‘1123); in science he was unrivalled,—the very
 → ‘paragon of his age. Khwájah Nizámi of Samar-
 ‘cand, who was one of his pupils, relates the
 ‘following story: ‘I often used to hold conversa-
 ‘tions with my teacher, Omar Khayyám, in a gar-
 ‘den; and one day he said to me, ‘My tomb shall
 ‘be in a spot where the north wind may scatter
 ‘roses over it.’ I wondered at the words he spake,
 ‘but I knew that his were no idle words.¹ Years
 ‘after, when I chanced to revisit Naishápúr, I
 ‘went to his final resting-place, and lo! it was just

¹ The Rashness of the Words, according to D’Herbelot, consisted in being so opposed to those in the Korán: “No Man knows where he shall die.”—This Story of Omar reminds me of another so naturally—and, when one remembers how wide of his humble mark the noble sailor aimed—so pathetically told by Captain Cook—not by Doctor Hawkesworth—in his Second Voyage. When leaving Ulitea, “Oreo’s last request was for me to return. When he saw he could not obtain that promise, he asked the name of my *Marai*—Burying-place. As strange a question as this was, I hesitated not a moment to tell him ‘Stepney,’ the parish in which I live when in London. I was made to repeat it several times over till they could pronounce it; and then ‘Stepney Marai no Toote’ was echoed through a hundred mouths at once. I afterwards found the same question had been put to Mr. Forster by a man on shore; but he gave a different, and indeed more proper answer, by saying, ‘No man who used the sea could say where he should be buried.’”

‘outside a garden, and trees laden with fruit
‘stretched their boughs over the garden wall, and
‘dropped their flowers upon his tomb, so as the
‘stone was hidden under them.’”

Thus far — without fear of Trespass — from the *Calcutta Review*. The writer of it, on reading in India this story of Omar's Grave, was reminded, he says, of Cicero's Account of finding Archimedes' Tomb at Syracuse, buried in grass and weeds. I think Thorwaldsen desired to have roses grow over him; a wish religiously fulfilled for him to the present day, I believe. However, to return to Omar.

Though the Sultan “shower'd Favours upon him,” Omar's Epicurean Audacity of Thought and Speech caused him to be regarded askance in his own Time and Country. He is said to have been especially hated and dreaded by the Súfis, whose Practice he ridiculed, and whose Faith amounts to little more than his own when stript of the Mysticism and formal recognition of Islamism under which Omar would not hide. Their Poets, including Háfiz, who are (with the exception of Firdausi) the most considerable in Persia, borrowed largely, indeed, of Omar's material, but turning it to a mystical Use more convenient to Themselves and

the People they addressed; a People quite as quick of Doubt as of Belief; as keen of Bodily Sense as of Intellectual; and delighting in a cloudy composition of both, in which they could float luxuriously between Heaven and Earth, and this World and the Next, on the wings of a poetical expression, that might serve indifferently for either. Omar was too honest of Heart as well as of Head for this. Having failed (however mistakenly) of finding any Providence but Destiny, and any World but This, he set about making the most of it; preferring rather to soothe the Soul through the Senses into Acquiescence with Things as he saw them, than to perplex it with vain disquietude after what they *might* be. It has been seen, however, that his Worldly Ambition was not exorbitant; and he very likely takes a humorous or perverse pleasure in exalting the gratification of Sense above that of the Intellect, in which he must have taken great delight, although it failed to answer the Questions in which he, in common with all men, was most vitally interested.

For whatever Reason, however, Omar, as before said, has never been popular in his own Country, and therefore has been but scantily transmitted abroad. The MSS. of his Poems, mutilated beyond the average Casualties of Oriental Transcription,

are so rare in the East as scarce to have reacht Westward at all, in spite of all the acquisitions of Arms and Science. There is no copy at the India House, none at the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris. We know but of one in England: No. 140 of the Ouseley MSS. at the Bodleian, written at Shiraz, A. D. 1460. This contains but 158 Rubáiyát. One in the Asiatic Society's Library at Calcutta (of which we have a Copy), contains (and yet incomplete) 516, though swelled to that by all kinds of Repetition and Corruption. So Von Hammer speaks of *his* Copy as containing about 200, while Dr. Sprenger catalogues the Lucknow MS. at double that number.¹ The Scribes, too, of the Oxford and Calcutta MSS. seem to do their Work under a sort of Protest; each beginning with a Tetrastich (whether genuine or not), taken out of its alphabetical order; the Oxford with one of Apology; the Calcutta with one of Expostulation, supposed (says a Notice prefixed to the MS.) to have arisen from a Dream, in which Omar's mother asked about his future fate. It may be rendered thus:—

¹ "Since this Paper was written" (adds the Reviewer in a note), "we have met with a Copy of a very rare Edition, printed at Calcutta in 1836. This contains 438 Tetrastichs, with an Appendix containing 54 others not found in some MSS."

"Oh Thou who burn'st in Heart for those who burn
 "In Hell, whose fires thyself shall feed in turn;
 "How long be crying, 'Mercy on them, God!'
 "Why, who art Thou to teach, and He to learn?"

The Bodleian Quatrain pleads Pantheism by way of Justification.

"If I myself upon a looser Creed
 "Have loosely strung the Jewel of Good deed,
 "Let this one thing for my Atonement plead:
 "That One for Two I never did mis-read."

The Reviewer, to whom I owe the Particulars of Omar's Life, concludes his Review by comparing him with Lucretius, both as to natural Temper and Genius, and as acted upon by the Circumstances in which he lived. Both indeed were men of subtle, strong, and cultivated Intellect, fine Imagination, and Hearts passionate for Truth and Justice; who justly revolted from their Country's false Religion, and false, or foolish, Devotion to it; but who fell short of replacing what they subverted by such better *Hope* as others, with no better Revelation to guide them, had yet made a Law to themselves. Lucretius, indeed, with such material as Epicurus furnished, satisfied himself with the theory of a vast machine fortuitously constructed, and acting by a Law that implied no Legislator;

and so composing himself into a Stoical rather than Epicurean severity of Attitude, sat down to contemplate the mechanical Drama of the Universe which he was part Actor in; himself and all about him (as in his own sublime description of the Roman Theatre) discoloured with the lurid reflex of the Curtain suspended between the Spectator and the Sun. Omar, more desperate, or more careless of any so complicated System as resulted in nothing but hopeless Necessity, flung his own Genius and Learning with a bitter or humorous jest into the general Ruin which their insufficient glimpses only served to reveal; and, pretending sensual pleasure as the serious purpose of Life, only *diverted* himself with speculative problems of Deity, Destiny, Matter and Spirit, Good and Evil, and other such questions, easier to start than to run down, and the pursuit of which becomes a very weary sport at last!

With regard to the present Translation. The original Rubáiyát (as, missing an Arabic Guttural, these *Testrastichs* are more musically called) are independent Stanzas, consisting each of four Lines of equal, though varied, Prosody; sometimes *all* rhyming, but oftener (as here imitated) the third line a blank. Sometimes as in the Greek Alcaic, where the penultimate line seems

to lift and suspend the Wave that falls over in the last. As usual with such kind of Oriental Verse, the Rubáiyát follow one another according to Alphabetic Rhyme — a strange succession of Grave and Gay. Those here selected are strung into something of an Eclogue, with perhaps a less than equal proportion of the “Drink and make-merry,” which (genuine or not) recurs over-frequently in the Original. Either way, the Result is sad enough: saddest perhaps when most ostentatiously merry: more apt to move Sorrow than Anger toward the old Tent-maker, who, after vainly endeavouring to unshackle his Steps from Destiny, and to catch some authentic Glimpse of TO-MORROW, fell back upon TO-DAY (which has outlasted so many To-morrows!) as the only Ground he got to stand upon, however momentarily slipping from under his Feet.

[From the Third Edition.]

While the second Edition of this version of Omar was preparing, Monsieur Nicolas, French Consul at Resht, published a very careful and very good Edition of the Text, from a lithograph copy at Teheran, comprising 464 Rubáiyát, with translation and notes of his own.

Mons. Nicolas, whose Edition has reminded me of several things, and instructed me in others, does not consider Omar to be the material Epicurean that I have literally taken him for, but a Mystic, shadowing the Deity under the figure of Wine, Wine-bearer, &c., as Háfiz is supposed to do; in short, a Súfi Poet like Háfiz and the rest.

I cannot see reason to alter my opinion, formed as it was more than a dozen years ago when Omar was first shown me by one to whom I am indebted for all I know of Oriental, and very much of other, literature. He admired Omar's Genius so much, that he would gladly have adopted any such Interpretation of his meaning as Mons. Nicolas' if he could.¹ That he could not, appears by his Paper in the *Calcutta Review* already so largely quoted; in which he argues from the Poems themselves, as well as from what records remain of the Poet's Life.

And if more were needed to disprove Mons. Nicolas' Theory, there is the Biographical Notice which he himself has drawn up in direct contradiction to the Interpretation of the Poems

¹ Perhaps would have edited the Poems himself some years ago. He may now as little approve of my Version on one side, as of Mons. Nicolas' Theory on the other.

given in his Notes. (See pp. 13-14 of his Preface.) Indeed I hardly knew poor Omar was so far gone till his Apologist informed me. For here we see that, whatever were the Wine that Háfiz drank and sang, the veritable Juice of the Grape it was which Omar used, not only when carousing with his friends, but (says Mons. Nicolas) in order to excite himself to that pitch of Devotion which others reached by cries and "hurlemens." And yet, whenever Wine, Wine-bearer, &c., occur in the Text—which is often enough—Mons. Nicolas carefully annotates "Dieu," "La Divinité," &c.: so carefully indeed that one is tempted to think that he was indoctrinated by the Súfi with whom he read the Poems. (Note to Rub. ii. p. 8.) A Persian would naturally wish to vindicate a distinguished Countryman; and a Súfi to enrol him in his own sect, which already comprises all the chief Poets of Persia.

What historical Authority has Mons. Nicolas to show that Omar gave himself up "*avec passion à l'étude de la philosophie des Soufis*"? (Preface, p. xiii.) The Doctrines of Pantheism, Materialism, Necessity, &c., were not peculiar to the Súfi; nor to Lucretius before them; nor to Epicurus before him; probably the very original Irreligion of Thinking men from the first; and very

likely to be the spontaneous growth of a Philosopher living in an Age of social and political barbarism, under shadow of one of the Two and Seventy Religions supposed to divide the world. Von Hammer (according to Sprenger's Oriental Catalogue) speaks of Omar as "a Free-thinker, and a great opponent of *Sufism*;" perhaps because, while holding much of their Doctrine, he would not pretend to any inconsistent severity of morals. Sir W. Ouseley has written a note to something of the same effect on the fly-leaf of the Bodleian MS. And in two Rubáiyát of Mons. Nicolas' own Edition *Súf* and *Súfi* are both disparagingly named.

No doubt many of these Quatrains seem unaccountable unless mystically interpreted; but many more as unaccountable unless literally. Were the Wine spiritual, for instance, how wash the Body with it when dead? Why make cups of the dead clay to be filled with—"La Divinité" by some succeeding Mystic? Mons. Nicolas himself is puzzled by some "bizarres" and "trop Orientales" allusions and images—"d'une sensualité quelquefois révoltante" indeed—which "les convenances" do not permit him to translate; but still which the reader cannot but refer to "La Divinité."¹ No doubt

¹ A note to Quatrain 234 admits that, however clear the mystical meaning of such Images must be to Europeans,

also many of the Quatrains in the Teheran, as in the Calcutta, Copies, are spurious; such *Rubáiyát* being the common form of Epigram in Persia. But this, at best, tells as much one way as another; nay, the Súfi, who may be considered the Scholar and Man of Letters in Persia, would be far more likely than the careless Epicure to interpolate what favours his own view of the Poet. I observed that very few of the more mystical Quatrains are in the Bodleian MS., which must be one of the oldest, as dated at Shiraz, A. H. 865, A. D. 1460. And this, I think, especially distinguishes Omar (I cannot help calling him by his—no, not Christian—familiar name) from all other Persian Poets: That, whereas with them the Poet is lost in his Song, the Man in Allegory and Abstraction; we seem to have the Man—the *Bonhomme*—Omar himself, with all his Humours and Passions, as frankly before us as if

they are not quoted without “rougissant” even by laymen in Persia—“Quant aux termes de tendresse qui commencent ce quatrain, comme tant d’autres dans ce recueil, nos lecteurs, habitués maintenant à l’étrangeté des expressions si souvent employées par Khéyam pour rendre ses pensées sur l’amour divin, et à la singularité des images trop orientales, d’une sensualité quelquefois révoltante, n’auront pas de peine à se persuader qu’il s’agit de la Divinité, bien que cette conviction soit vivement disentée par les mollahs musulmans, et même par beaucoup de laïques, qui rougissent véritablement d’une pareille licence de leur compatriote à l’égard des choses spirituelles.”

we were really at Table with him, after the Wine had gone round.

I must say that I, for one, never wholly believed in the Mysticism of Háfiz. It does not appear there was any danger in holding and singing Súfí Pantheism, so long as the Poet made his Salaam to Mohammed at the beginning and end of his Song. Under such conditions Jeláluddín, Jámi, Attár, and others sang; using Wine and Beauty indeed as Images to illustrate, not as a Mask to hide, the Divinity they were celebrating. Perhaps some Allegory less liable to mistake or abuse had been better among so inflammable a People: much more so when, as some think with Háfiz and Omar, the abstract is not only likened to, but identified with, the sensual Image; hazardous, if not to the Devotee himself, yet to his weaker Brethren; and worse for the Profane in proportion as the Devotion of the Initiated grew warmer. And all for what? To be tantalized with Images of sensual enjoyment which must be renounced if one would approximate a God, who according to the Doctrine, *is* Sensual Matter as well as Spirit, and into whose Universe one expects unconsciously to merge after Death, without hope of any post-humous Beatitude in another world to compensate for all one's self-denial in this. Lucretius'

blind Divinity certainly merited, and probably got, as much self-sacrifice as this of the Súfi; and the burden of Omar's Song—if not “Let us eat”—is assuredly—“Let us drink, for To-morrow we die!” And if Háfiz meant quite otherwise by a similar language, he surely miscalculated when he devoted his Life and Genius to so equivocal a Psalmody as, from his Day to this, has been said and sung by any rather than spiritual Worshipers.

However, as there is some traditional presumption, and certainly the opinion of some learned men, in favour of Omar's being a Súfi—and even something of a Saint—those who please may so interpret his Wine and Cup-bearer. On the other hand, as there is far more historical certainty of his being a Philosopher, of scientific Insight and Ability far beyond that of the Age and Country he lived in; of such moderate worldly Ambition as becomes a Philosopher, and such moderate wants as rarely satisfy a Debauchee; other readers may be content to believe with me that, while the Wine Omar celebrates is simply the Juice of the Grape, he bragg'd more than he drank of it, in very defiance perhaps of that Spiritual Wine which left its Votaries sunk in Hypocrisy or Disgust.

RUBÁIYÁT

OF

OMAR KHAYYÁM OF NAISHÁPÚR.

RUBÁIYÁT
OF
OMAR KHAYYÁM OF NAISHÁPÚR.

FOURTH EDITION.

I

WAKE! For the Sun who scatter'd into flight
The Stars before him from the Field of Night,
Drives Night along with them from Heav'n, and strikes
The Sultán's Turret with a Shaft of Light.

II

Before the phantom of False morning died,
Methought a Voice within the Tavern cried,
“When all the Temple is prepared within,
“Why nods the drowsy Worshipper outside?”

III

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before
The Tavern shouted — “Open then the Door!

“You know how little while we have to stay,
“And, once departed, may return no more.”

IV

Now the New Year reviving old Desires,
The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires,
Where the WHITE HAND OF MOSES on the Bough
Puts out, and Jesus from the ground suspires.

V

Iram indeed is gone with all his Rose,
And Jamshyd's Sev'n-ring'd Cup where no one knows;
But still a Ruby kindles in the Vine,
And many a Garden by the Water blows.

VI

And David's lips are lockt; but in divine
High-piping Pehleví, with “Wine! Wine! Wine!”
“Red Wine!” — the Nightingale cries to the Rose
That sallow cheek of hers to' incarnadine.

VII

Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling:

The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter — and the Bird is on the Wing.

VIII

Whether at Naishápúr or Babylon,
Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run,
The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by drop,
The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one.

IX

Each Morn a thousand Roses brings, you say ;
Yes, but where leaves the Rose of Yesterday ?
And this first Summer month that brings the Rose
Shall take Jamshyd and Kaikobád away.

X

Well, let it take them ! What have we to do
With Kaikobád the Great, or Kaikhosrú ?

Let Zál and Rustum bluster as they will,
Or Hátim call to Supper — heed not you.

XI

With me along the strip of Herbage strewn
That just divides the desert from the sown,
Where name of Slave and Sultán is forgot —
And Peace to Mahmúd on his golden Throne !

XII

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread — and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness —
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow !

XIII

Some for the Glories of this World ; and some
Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come ;
Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go,
Nor heed the rumble of a distant Drum !

*

XIV

Look to the blowing Rose about us — “ Lo,
“ Laughing,” she says, “ into the world I blow,
“ At once the silken tassel of my Purse
“ Tear, and its Treasure on the Garden throw.”

XV

And those who husbanded the Golden grain,
And those who flung it to the winds like Rain,
Alike to no such aureate Earth are turn'd
As, buried once, Men want dug up again.

XVI

The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes — or it prospers ; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face,
Lighting a little hour or two — was gone.

XVII

Think, in this batter'd Caravanserai
Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp
Abode his destin'd Hour, and went his way.

XVIII

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep :
And Bahrá'm, that great Hunter—the Wild Ass
Stamps o'er his Head, but cannot break his Sleep.

XIX

I sometimes think that never blows so red
The Rose as where some buried Cæsar bled ;
That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
Dropt in her Lap from some once lovely Head.

XX

And this reviving Herb whose tender Green
Fledges the River-Lip on which we lean —
Ah, lean upon it lightly ! for who knows
From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen !

XXI

Ah, my Belovéd, fill the Cup that clears
TO-DAY of past Regret and future Fears :
To-morrow ! — Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n thousand Years.

XXII

For some we loved, the loveliest and the best
That from his Vintage rolling Time hath prest,
Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,
And one by one crept silently to rest.

XXIII

And we that now make merry in the Room
They left, and Summer dresses in new bloom,
Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of Earth
Descend — ourselves to make a Couch — for whom ?

XXIV

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend ;
Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and — sans End !

XXV

Alike for those who for TO-DAY prepare,
And those that after some TO-MORROW stare,
A Muezzín from the Tower of Darkness cries,
“Fools ! your Reward is neither Here nor There.”

XXVI

Why, all the Saints and Sages who discuss'd
Of the two Worlds so wisely — they are thrust
Like foolish Prophets forth ; their Words to Scorn
Are scatter'd, and their Mouths are stopt with Dust.

XXVII

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
 Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
 About it and about: but evermore
 Came out by the same door where in I went.

XXVIII

With them the seed of Wisdom did I sow,
 And with mine own hand wrought to make it grow;
 And this was all the Harvest that I reap'd —
 "I came like Water, and like Wind I go."

XXIX

Into this Universe, and *Why* not knowing
 Nor *Whence*, like Water willy-nilly flowing;
 And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
 I know not *Whither*, willy-nilly blowing.

XXX

What, without asking, hither hurried *Whence*?
 And, without asking, *Whither* hurried hence!
 Oh, many a Cup of this forbidden Wine
 Must drown the memory of that insolence!

XXXI

Up from Earth's Centre through the Seventh Gate
I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn sate,
 And many a Knot unravel'd by the Road ;
But not the Master-knot of Human Fate.

XXXII

There was the Door to which I found no Key ;
There was the Veil through which I might not see :
 Some little talk awhile of ME and THEE
There was — and then no more of THEE and ME.

XXXIII

Earth could not answer ; nor the Seas that mourn
In flowing Purple, of their Lord forlorn ;
 Nor rolling Heaven, with all his Signs reveal'd
And hidden by the sleeve of Night and Morn.

XXXIV

Then of the THEE IN ME who works behind
The Veil, I lifted up my hands to find
 A Lamp amid the Darkness ; and I heard,
As from Without — “ THE ME WITHIN THEE BLIND ! ”

XXXV

Then to the Lip of this poor earthen Urn
 I lean'd, the Secret of my Life to learn:
 And Lip to Lip it murmur'd — "While you live,
 "Drink! — for, once dead, you never shall return."

XXXVI

I think the Vessel, that with fugitive
 Articulation answer'd, once did live,
 And drink; and Ah! the passive Lip I kiss'd,
 How many Kisses might it take — and give!

XXXVII

For I remember stopping by the way
 To watch a Potter thumping his wet Clay:
 And with its all-obliterated Tongue
 It murmur'd — "Gently, Brother, gently, pray!"

XXXVIII

And has not such a Story from of Old
 Down Man's successive generations roll'd
 Of such a cloud of saturated Earth
 Cast by the Maker into Human mould?

XXXIX

And not a drop that from our Cups we throw
 For Earth to drink of, but may steal below
 To quench the fire of Anguish in some Eye
 There hidden — far beneath, and long ago.

XL

As then the Tulip for her morning sup
 Of Heav'nly Vintage from the soil looks up,
 Do you devoutly do the like, till Heav'n
 To Earth invert you — like an empty Cup.

XLI

Perplext no more with Human or Divine,
 To-morrow's tangle to the winds resign,
 And lose your fingers in the tresses of
 The Cypress-slender Minister of Wine.

XLII

And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press,
 End in what All begins and ends in — Yes;
 Think then you are TO-DAY what YESTERDAY
 You were — TO-MORROW you shall not be less.

XLIII

So when the Angel of the darker Drink
At last shall find you by the river-brink,
And, offering his Cup, invite your Soul
Forth to your Lips to quaff—you shall not shrink.

XLIV

Why, if the Soul can fling the Dust aside,
And naked on the Air of Heaven ride,
Wer't not a Shame — wer't not a Shame for him
In this clay carcase crippled to abide ?

XLV

'T is but a Tent where takes his one day's rest
A Sultán to the realm of Death addrest ;
The Sultán rises, and the dark Ferrásh
Strikes, and prepares it for another Guest.

XLVI

And fear not lest Existence closing your
Account, and mine, should know the like no more ;
The Eternal Sáki from that Bowl has pour'd
Millions of Bubbles like us, and will pour.

XLVII

When You and I behind the Veil are past,
Oh, but the long, long while the World shall last,
Which of our Coming and Departure heeds
As the Sea's self should heed a pebble-cast.

XLVIII

A Moment's Halt—a momentary taste
Of BEING from the Well amid the Waste—
And Lo!—the phantom Caravan has reacht
The NOTHING it set out from—Oh, make haste!

XLIX

Would you that spangle of Existence spend
About THE SECRET—quick about it, Friend!
A Hair perhaps divides the False and True,
And upon what, prithee, does life depend?

L

A Hair perhaps divides the False and True;
Yes; and a single Alif were the clue—
Could you but find it—to the Treasure-house,
And peradventure to THE MASTER too;

LI

Whose secret Presence, through Creation's veins
Running Quicksilver-like eludes your pains ;
Taking all shapes from Máh to Máhi ; and
They change and perish all — but He remains ;

LII

A moment guess'd — then back behind the Fold
Immerst of Darkness round the Drama roll'd
Which, for the Pastime of Eternity,
He doth Himself contrive, enact, behold.

LIII

But if in vain, down on the stubborn floor
Of Earth, and up to Heav'n's unopening Door,
You gaze TO-DAY, while You are You — how then
TO-MORROW, You when shall be You no more ?

LIV

Waste not your Hour, nor in the vain pursuit
Of This and That endeavour and dispute ;
Better be jocund with the fruitful Grape
Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

LV

You know, my Friends, with what a brave Carouse
I made a Second Marriage in my house ;
Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed,
And took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse.

LVI

For "IS" and "IS-NOT" though with Rule and Line,
And "UP-AND-DOWN" by Logic I define,
Of all that one should care to fathom, I
Was never deep in anything but — Wine.

LVII

Ah, but my Computations, People say,
Reduced the Year to better reckoning? — Nay,
'T was only striking from the Calendar
Unborn To-morrow, and dead Yesterday.

LVIII

And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,
Came shining through the Dusk an Angel Shape
Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder ; and
He bid me taste of it ; and 't was — the Grape !

LIX

The Grape that can with Logic absolute
The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute :
The sovereign Alchemist that in a trice
Life's leaden metal into Gold transmute :

LX

The mighty Mahmúd, Allah-breathing Lord,
That all the misbelieving and black Horde
Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul
Scatters before him with his whirlwind Sword.

LXI

Why, be this Juice the growth of God, who dare
Blaspheme the twisted tendril as a Snare ?
A Blessing, we should use it, should we not ?
And if a Curse — why, then, Who set it there ?

LXII

I must abjure the Balm of Life, I must,
Scared by some After-reckoning ta'en on trust,
Or lured with Hope of some Diviner Drink,
To fill the Cup — when crumbled into Dust !

LXIII

Oh threats of Hell and Hopes of Paradise !
One thing at least is certain — *This* Life flies ;
One thing is certain and the rest is Lies ;
The Flower that once has blown for ever dies.

LXIV

Strange, is it not ? that of the myriads who
Before us pass'd the door of Darkness through,
Not one returns to tell us of the Road,
Which to discover we must travel too.

LXV

The Revelations of Devout and Learn'd
Who rose before us, and as Prophets burn'd,
Are all but Stories, which, awoke from Sleep
They told their comrades and to Sleep return'd.

LXVI

I sent my Soul through the Invisible,
Some letter of that After-life to spell :
And by and by my Soul return'd to me,
And answer'd " I Myself am Heav'n and Hell : "

LXVII

Heav'n but the Vision of fulfill'd Desire,
And Hell the Shadow from a Soul on fire
Cast on the Darkness into which Ourselves,
So late emerg'd from, shall so soon expire.

LXVIII

We are no other than a moving row
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go
Round with the Sun-illumin'd Lantern held
In Midnight by the Master of the Show ;

LXIX

But helpless Pieces of the Game He plays
Upon this Chequer-board of Nights and Days :
Hither and thither moves, and checks, and slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

LXX

The Ball no question makes of Ayes and Noes,
But Here or There as strikes the Player goes ;
And He that toss'd you down into the Field,
He knows about it all — HE knows — HE knows !

LXXI

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit
^{Can} Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.

LXXII

And that inverted Bowl they call the Sky,
Whereunder crawling coop'd we live and die,
Lift not your hands to *It* for help — for it
As impotently moves as you or I.

LXXIII

With Earth's first Clay They did the Last Man knead,
And there of the Last Harvest sow'd the Seed:
And the first Morning of Creation wrote
What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall read.

LXXIV

YESTERDAY *This* Day's Madness did prepare;
TO-MORROW'S Silence, Triumph, or Despair:
Drink! for you know not whence you came, nor why:
Drink! for you know not why you go, nor where.

LXXV

I tell you this — When, started from the Goal,
Over the flaming shoulders of the Foal
Of Heav'n Parwín and Mushtarí they flung,
In my predestin'd Plot of Dust and Soul

LXXVI

The Vine had struck a fibre: which about
If clings my Being — let the Dervish flout;
Of my Base metal may be filed a Key,
That shall unlock the Door he howls without.

LXXVII

And this I know: whether the one True Light
Kindle to Love, or Wrath-consume me quite,
One flash of It within the Tavern caught
Better than in the Temple lost outright.

LXXVIII

What! out of senseless Nothing to provoke
A conscious Something to resent the yoke
Of unpermitted Pleasure, under pain
Of Everlasting Penalties, if broke!

LXXIX

What! from his helpless Creature be repaid
Pure Gold for what he lent him dross-allay'd —
Sue for a Debt we never did contract,
And cannot answer — Oh the sorry trade!

LXXX

Oh Thou, who didst with pitfall and with gin
Beset the Road I was to wander in,
Thou wilt not with Predestin'd Evil round
Enmesh, and then impute my Fall to Sin!

LXXXI

Oh Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make,
And ev'n with Paradise devise the Snake:
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blacken'd — Man's forgiveness give — and take!

* * * * *

LXXXII

As under cover of departing Day
 Slunk hunger-stricken Ramazán away,
 Once more within the Potter's house alone
 I stood, surrounded by the Shapes of Clay.

LXXXIII

Shapes of all Sorts and Sizes, great and small,
 That stood along the floor and by the wall;
 And some loquacious vessels were; and some
 Listen'd perhaps, but never talk'd at all.

LXXXIV

Said one among them — "Surely not in vain
 My substance of the common Earth was ta'en
 And to this Figure moulded, to be broke,
 Or trampled back to shapeless Earth again.

LXXXV

Then said a Second — "Ne'er a peevish Boy
 "Would break the Bowl from which he drank in joy;
 " And He that with his hand the Vessel made
 "Will surely not in after Wrath destroy."

LXXXVI

After a momentary silence spake
Some Vessel of a more ungainly make :
 " They sneer at me for leaning all awry :
" What ! did the Hand then of the Potter shake ? "

LXXXVII

Whereat some one of the loquacious Lot —
I think a Súfí pipkin — waxing hot —
 " All this of Pot and Potter — Tell me then,
" Who is the Potter, pray, and who the Pot ? "

LXXXVIII

" Why," said another, " Some there are who tell
" Of one who threatens he will toss to Hell
 " The luckless Pots he marr'd in making — Pish!
" He's a Good Fellow, and 't will all be well."

LXXXIX

" Well," murmur'd one, " Let whoso make or buy,
" My Clay with long Oblivion is gone dry :
 " But fill me with the old familiar Juice,
" Methinks I might recover by and by."

XC

So while the Vessels one by one were speaking,
The little Moon look'd in that all were seeking :
And then they jogg'd each other, " Brother ! Brother !
" Now for the Porter's shoulder-knot a-creaking ! "



XCI

Ah, with the Grape my fading Life provide,
And wash the Body whence the Life has died,
And lay me, shrouded in the living Leaf,
By some not unfrequented Garden-side.

XCII

That ev'n my buried Ashes such a snare
Of Vintage shall fling up into the Air
As not a True-believer passing by
But shall be overtaken unaware.

XCIII

Indeed the Idols I have loved so long
Have done my credit in this World much wrong :
Have drown'd my Glory in a shallow Cup,
And sold my reputation for a Song.

XCIV

Indeed, indeed, Repentance oft before
I swore — but was I sober when I swore ?
And then and then came Spring, and Rose-in-hand
My thread-bare Penitence apieces tore.

XCV

And much as Wine has play'd the Infidel,
And robb'd me of my Robe of Honour — Well,
I wonder often what the Vintners buy
One half so precious as the stuff they sell.

XCVI

Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with the Rose !
That Youth's sweet-scented manuscript should close !
The Nightingale that in the branches sang,
Ah whence, and whither flown again, who knows !

XCVII

Would but the Desert of the Fountain yield
 One glimpse — if dimly, yet indeed, reveal'd,
 To which the fainting Traveller might spring,
 As springs the trampled herbage of the field !

XCVIII

Would but some wingéd Angel ere too late
 Arrest the yet unfolded Roll of Fate,
 And make the stern Recorder otherwise
 Enregister, or quite obliterate !

XCIX

Ah Love ! could you and I with Him conspire
 To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
 Would not we shatter it to bits — and then
 Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's desire !

* * * * *

C

Yon rising Moon that looks for us again —
How oft hereafter will she wax and wane ;
How oft hereafter rising look for us
Through this same Garden — and for *one* in vain !

CI

And when like her, oh Sáki, you shall pass
Among the Guests Star-scatter'd on the Grass,
And in your joyous errand reach the spot
Where I made One — turn down an empty Glass !

TAMÁM.

RUBÁIYÁT
OF
OMAR KHAYYÁM OF NAISHÁPÚR.

FIRST EDITION.

I

AWAKE! *for Morning in the Bowl of Night*
Has flung the Stone that puts the Stars to Flight:
And Lo! the Hunter of the East has caught
The Sultán's Turret in a Noose of Light.

II

Dreaming, when Dawn's Left Hand was in the Sky,
I heard a Voice within the Tavern cry,
"Awake, my Little ones, and fill the Cup
"Before Life's Liquor in its Cup be dry."

III

*And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before
The Tavern shouted — “Open then the Door !*

*“You know how little while we have to stay,
“And, once departed, may return no more.”*

IV

*Now, the New Year reviving old Desires,
The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires,*

*Where the WHITE HAND OF MOSES on the Bough
Puts out, and Jesus from the Ground suspires.*

V

*Iram indeed is gone with all its Rose,
And Jamshýd's Sev'n-ring'd Cup where no one knows ;
But still the Vine her ancient Ruby yields,
And still a Garden by the Water blows.*

VI

*And David's Lips are lock't ; but in divine
High piping Pehlevi, with “Wine ! Wine ! Wine !*

*“Red Wine !” — the Nightingale cries to the Rose
That yellow Cheek of her's to 'incarnadine.*

VII

*Come, fill the Cup, and in the Fire of Spring
The Winter Garment of Repentance fling:*

*The Bird of Time has but a little way
To fly — and Lo! the Bird is on the Wing.*

VIII

*And look — a thousand Blossoms with the Day
Woke — and a thousand scatter'd into Clay:*

*And this first Summer Month that brings the Rose
Shall take Jamshýd and Kaikobád away.*

IX

*But come with old Khayyám, and leave the Lot
Of Kaikobád and Kaikhosrú forgot:*

*Let Rustum lay about him as he will,
Or Hátim Tai cry Supper — heed them not.*

X

*With me along some Strip of Herbage strown
That just divides the desert from the sown,*

*Where name of Slave and Sultán scarce is known,
And pity Sultán Mahmúd on his Throne.*

XI

*Here with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,
A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse — and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness —
And Wilderness is Paradise enow.*

XII

*"How sweet is mortal Sovranty!" — think some:
Others — "How blest the Paradise to come!"
Ah, take the Cash in hand and waive the Rest;
Oh, the brave Music of a distant Drum!*

XIII

*Look to the Rose that blows about us — "Lo,
"Laughing," she says, "into the World I blow:
"At once the silken Tassel of my Purse
"Tear, and its Treasure on the Garden throw."*

XIV

*The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes — or it prospers; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face
Lighting a little Hour or two — is gone.*

XV

*And those who husbanded the Golden Grain,
And those who flung it to the Winds like Rain,
Alike to no such aureate Earth are turn'd
As, buried once, Men want dug up again.*

XVI

*Think, in this batter'd Caravanserai
Whose Doorways are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp
Abode his Hour or two, and went his way.*

XVII

*They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshýd gloried and drank deep :
And Bahrám, that great Hunter — the Wild Ass
Stamps o'er his Head, and he lies fast asleep.*

XVIII

*I sometimes think that never blows so red
The Rose as where some buried Cæsar bled ;
That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
Dropt in its Lap from some once lovely Head.*

XIX

*And this delightful Herb whose tender Green
Fledges the River's Lip on which we lean —
Ah, lean upon it lightly ! for who knows
From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen !*

XX

*Ah, my Belovéd, fill the Cup that clears
To-day of past Regrets and future Fears —
To-morrow ? — Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n Thousand Years.*

XXI

*Lo ! some we loved, the loveliest and best
That Time and Fate of all their Vintage prest,
Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,
And one by one crept silently to Rest.*

XXII

*And we, that now make merry in the Room
They left, and Summer dresses in new Bloom,
Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of Earth
Descend, ourselves to make a Couch — for whom ?*

XXIII

*Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend ;
Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and — sans End!*

XXIV

*Alike for those who for TO-DAY prepare,
And those that after a TO-MORROW stare,
A Muezzín from the Tower of Darkness cries
"Fools ! your Reward is neither Here nor There !"*

XXV

*Why, all the Saints and Sages who discuss'd
Of the Two Worlds so learnedly, are thrust
Like foolish Prophets forth ; their Words to Scorn
Are scatter'd, and their Mouths are stopt with Dust.*

XXVI

*Oh, come with old Khayyám, and leave the Wise
To talk ; one thing is certain, that Life flies ;
One thing is certain, and the Rest is Lies ;
The Flower that once has blown for ever dies.*

XXVII

*Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great Argument
About it and about : but evermore
Came out by the same Door as in I went.*

XXVIII

*With them the Seed of Wisdom did I sow,
And with my own hand labour'd it to grow :
And this was all the Harvest that I reap'd —
“ I came like Water, and like Wind I go.”*

XXIX

*Into this Universe, and why not knowing,
Nor whence, like Water willy-nilly flowing :
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not whither, willy-nilly blowing.*

XXX

*What, without asking, hither hurried whence ?
And, without asking, whither hurried hence !
Another and another Cup to drown
The Memory of this Impertinence !*

XXXI

*Up from Earth's Centre through the Seventh Gate
I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn sate,
And many Knots unravel'd by the Road ;
But not the Knot of Human Death and Fate.*

XXXII

*There was a Door to which I found no Key :
There was a Veil past which I could not see :
Some little Talk awhile of ME and THEE
There seemed — and then no more of THEE and ME.*

XXXIII

*Then to the rolling Heav'n itself I cried,
Asking, " What Lamp had Destiny to guide
" Her little Children stumbling in the Dark ? "
And — " A blind Understanding ! " Heav'n replied.*

XXXIV

*Then to this earthen Bowl did I adjourn
My Lip the secret Well of Life to learn :
And Lip to Lip it murmur'd — " While you live
" Drink ! — for once dead you never shall return."*

XXXV

*I think the Vessel, that with fugitive
Articulation answer'd, once did live,
And merry-make; and the cold Lip I kiss'd
How many Kisses might it take — and give!*

XXXVI

*For in the Market-place, one Dusk of Day,
I watch'd the Potter thumping his wet Clay:
And with its all obliterated Tongue
It murmur'd — "Gently, Brother, gently, pray!"*

XXXVII

*Ah, fill the Cup: — what boots it to repeat
How Time is slipping underneath our Feet:
Unborn TO-MORROW, and dead YESTERDAY,
Why fret about them if TO-DAY be sweet!*

[From Preface.

*Oh, if my soul can fling his Dust aside,
And naked on the Air of Heaven ride,
Is 't not a Shame, is 't not a Shame for Him
So long in this Clay Suburb to abide?*

*Or is that but a Tent, where rests anon
A Sultán to his Kingdom passing on,
And which the swarthy Chamberlain shall strike
Then when the Sultán rises to be gone ?]*

XXXVIII

*One Moment in Annihilation's Waste,
One Moment, of the Well of Life to taste —
The Stars are setting and the Caravan
Starts for the Dawn of Nothing — Oh, make haste !*

XXXIX -

*How long, how long, in infinite Pursuit
Of This and That endeavour and dispute ?
Better be merry with the fruitful Grape,
Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.*

XL

*You know, my Friends, how long since in my House
For a new Marriage I did make Carouse :
Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed,
And took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse.*

XLI

*For "IS" and "IS-NOT" though with Rule and Line,
And "UP-AND-DOWN" without, I could define,
I yet in all I only cared to know,
Was never deep in anything but — Wine.*

XLII

*And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,
Came stealing through the Dusk an Angel Shape
Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder ; and
He bid me taste of it ; and 't was — the Grape !*

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*The Grape that can with Logic absolute
The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute :
The subtle Alchemist that in a Trice
Life's leaden Metal into Gold transmute.*

XLIV

*The mighty Mahmúd, the victorious Lord,
That all the misbelieving and black Horde
Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul
Scatters and slays with his enchanted Sword.*

XLV

*But leave the Wise to wrangle, and with me
The Quarrel of the Universe let be :*

*And in some corner of the Hubbub coucht,
Make Game of that which makes as much of Thee.*

XLVI

*For in and out, above, about, below,
'T is nothing but a Magic Shadow-show,
Play'd in a Box whose Candle is the Sun,
Round which we Phantom Figures come and go.*

XLVII

*And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press,
End in the Nothing all Things end in — Yes —
Then fancy while Thou art, Thou art but what
Thou shalt be — Nothing — Thou shalt not be less.*

XLVIII

*While the Rose blows along the River Brink,
With old Khayyám the Ruby Vintage drink :
And when the Angel with his darker Draught
Draws up to Thee — take that, and do not shrink.*

XLIX

*'T is all a Chequer-board of Nights and Days
Where Destiny with Men for Pieces plays :
Hither and thither moves, and mates, and slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays.*

L

*The Ball no Question makes of Ayes and Noes,
But Right or Left, as strikes the Player, goes ;
And He that toss'd Thee down into the Field,
He knows about it all — HE knows — HE knows !*

LI

*The Moving Finger writes ; and, having writ,
Moves on : nor all thy Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.*

LII

*And that inverted Bowl we call The Sky,
Whereunder crawling coop't we live and die,
Lift not thy hands to It for help — for It
Rolls impotently on as Thou or I.*

LIII

*With Earth's first Clay They did the Last Man's knead,
And then of the Last Harvest sow'd the Seed :*

*Yea, the first Morning of Creation wrote
What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall read.*

LIV

*I tell Thee this — When starting from the Goal,
Over the shoulders of the flaming Foal*

*Of Heav'n Parwin and Mushtarí they flung,
In my predistin'd Plot of Dust and Soul*

LV

*The Vine had struck a Fibre ; which about
If clings my Being — let the Súfi flout ;*

*Of my Base Metal may be filed a Key,
That shall unlock the Door he howls without.*

LVI

*And this I know : whether the one True Light,
Kindle to Love, or Wrath-consume me quite,*

*One Glimpse of It within the Tavern caught
Better than in the Temple lost outright.*

LVII

*Oh, Thou, who didst with Pitfall and with Gin
Beset the Road I was to wander in,*

*Thou wilt not with Predestination round
Enmesh me, and impute my Fall to Sin?*

LVIII

*Oh, Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make
And who with Eden didst devise the Snake;*

*For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blacken'd, Man's Forgiveness give — and take!*

* * * * *

KÚZA-NÁMA.

LIX

*LISTEN again. One Evening at the Close
Of Ramazán, ere the better Moon arose,*

*In that old Potter's Shop I stood alone
With the clay Population round in Rows.*

LX

*And, strange to tell, among that Earthen Lot
Some could articulate, while others not :*

*And suddenly one more impatient cried —
“ Who is the Potter, pray, and who the Pot ? ”*

LXI

*Then said another — “ Surely not in vain
“ My Substance from the common Earth was ta'en,*

*“ That He who subtly wrought me into Shape
“ Should stamp me back to common Earth again.”*

LXII

*Another said — “ Why, ne'er a peevish Boy,
“ Would break the Bowl from which he drank in Joy ;*

*“ Shall He that made the Vessel in pure Love
“ And Fanny, in an after Rage destroy ! ”*

LXIII

*None answer'd this ; but after Silence spake
A Vessel of a more ungainly Make :*

*“ They sneer at me for leaning all awry ;
“ What ! did the Hand then of the Potter shake ? ”*

LXIV

*Said one — " Folks of a surly Tapster tell,
 " And daub his Visage with the Smoke of Hell;
 " They talk of some strict Testing of us — Pish!
 " He's a Good Fellow, and 't will all be well."*

LXV

*Then said another with a long-drawn Sigh,
 " My Clay with long oblivion is gone dry:
 " But, fill me with the old familiar Juice,
 " Methinks I might recover by-and-bye!"*

LXVI

*So while the Vessels one by one were speaking,
 One spied the little Crescent all were seeking:
 And then they jogg'd each other, " Brother! Brother!
 " Hark to the Porter's Shoulder-knót a-creaking!"*

* * * * *

LXVII

*Ah, with the Grape my fading Life provide,
And wash my Body whence the Life has died,
And in the Windingsheet of Vine-leaf wrapt,
So bury me by some sweet Garden-side.*

LXVIII

*That ev'n my-buried Ashes such a Snare
Of Perfume shall fling up into the Air,
As not a True Believer passing by
But shall be overtaken unaware.*

LXIX

*Indeed the Idols I have loved so long
Have done my Credit in Men's Eye much wrong:
Have drown'd my Honour in a shallow Cup,
And sold my Reputation for a Song.*

LXX

*Indeed, indeed, Repentance oft before
I swore — but was I sober when I swore?
And then and then came Spring, and Rose-in-hand
My thread-bare Penitence apieces tore.*

LXXI

*And much as Wine has play'd the Infidel,
And robb'd me of my Robe of Honour — well,
I often wonder what the Vintners buy
One half so precious as the Goods they sell.*

LXXII

*Alas, that Spring should vanish with the Rose !
That Youth's sweet-scented Manuscript should close !
The Nightingale that in the Branches sang,
Ah, whence, and whither flown again, who knows !*

LXXIII

*Ah Love ! could thou and I with Fate conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
Would not we shatter it to bits — and then
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire !*

LXXIV

*Ah, Moon of my Delight who know'st no wane,
The Moon of Heav'n is rising once again :
How oft hereafter rising shall she look
Through this same Garden after me — in vain !*

LXXV

*And when Thyself with shining Foot shalt pass
Among the Guests Star-scatter'd on the Grass,
And in thy joyous Errand reach the Spot
Where I made one — turn down an empty Glass !*

TAMÁM SHUD.

NOTES.

[The references are, except in the first note only, to the stanzas of the Fourth edition.]

(Stanza I.) Flinging a Stone into the Cup was the signal for "To Horse!" in the Desert.

(II.) The "*False Dawn*;" *Subhi Kázib*, a transient Light on the Horizon about an hour before the *Subhi sádik* or True Dawn; a well-known Phenomenon in the East.

(IV.) New Year. Beginning with the Vernal Equinox, it must be remembered; and (howsoever the old Solar Year is practically superseded by the clumsy *Lunar* Year that dates from the Mohammedan Hijra) still commemorated by a Festival that is said to have been appointed by the very Jamshyd whom Omar so often talks of, and whose yearly Calendar he helped to rectify.

"The sudden approach and rapid advance of the Spring," says Mr. Binning, "are very striking. Before the Snow is well off the Ground, the Trees burst into Blossom, and the Flowers start from the Soil. At *Naw Roos* (their New Year's Day) the Snow was lying in patches on the Hills and in the shaded Vallies, while the Fruit-trees in the Garden were budding beautifully, and green Plants and Flowers springing upon the Plains on every side —

'And on old Hyems' Chin and icy Crown

'An odorous Chaplet of sweet Summer buds

'Is, as in mockery, set —' —

Among the Plants newly appear'd I recognized some Acquaintances I had not seen for many a Year: among

these, two varieties of the Thistle; a coarse species of the Daisy, like the Horse-gowan; red and white clover; the Dock; the blue Corn-flower; and that vulgar Herb the Dandelion rearing its yellow crest on the Banks of the Water-courses." The Nightingale was not yet heard, for the Rose was not yet blown: but an almost identical Blackbird and Woodpecker helped to make up something of a North-country Spring.

"The White Hand of Moses," Exodus iv. 6; where Moses draws forth his Hand — not, according to the Persians, "*leprous as Snow*," — but *white*, as our May-blossom in Spring perhaps. According to them also the Healing Power of Jesus resided in his Breath.

(V.) Iram, planted by King Shaddád, and now sunk somewhere in the Sands of Arabia. Jamshyd's Seven-ring'd Cup was typical of the 7 Heavens, 7 Planets, 7 Seas, &c., and was a *Divining Cup*.

(VI.) *Pehlevi*, the old Heroic *Sanskrit* of Persia. Háfiz also speaks of the Nightingale's *Pehlevi*, which did not change with the People's.

I am not sure if the fourth line refers to the Red Rose looking sickly, or to the Yellow Rose that ought to be Red; Red, White, and Yellow Roses all common in Persia. I think that Southey in his *Common-Place Book*, quotes from some Spanish author about the Rose being White till 10 o'clock; "*Rosa Perfecta*" at 2; and "*perfecta incarnada*" at 5.

(X.) Rustum, the "*Hercules*" of Persia, and Zál his Father, whose exploits are among the most celebrated in the *Sháhnáma*. Hátim Tai, a well-known type of Oriental Generosity.

(XIII.) A Drum — beaten outside a Palace.

(XIV.) That is, the Rose's Golden Centre.

(XVIII.) Persepolis: call'd also *Takht-i-Jamshyd* — THE THRONE OF JAMSHYD, "*King Splendid*," of the

mythical *Peshdádian* Dynasty, and supposed (according to the *Sháh-náma*) to have been founded and built by him. Others refer it to the Work of the Genie King, *Ján Ibn Ján* — who also built the Pyramids — before the time of Adam.

BAHRÁM GÚR.—*Bahram of the Wild Ass* — a Sassanian Sovereign — had also his Seven Castles (like the King of Bohemia!) each of a different Colour: each with a Royal Mistress within; each of whom tells him a Story, as told in one of the most famous Poems of Persia, written by *Amír Khusraw*: all these Sevens also figuring (according to Eastern Mysticism) the Seven Heavens; and perhaps the Book itself that Eighth, into which the mystical Seven transcend, and within which they revolve. The Ruins of Three of those Towers are yet shown by the Peasantry; as also the Swamp in which *Bahrám* sunk, like the Master of Ravenswood, while pursuing his *Gúr*.

The Palace that to Heav'n his pillars threw,
And Kings the forehead on his threshold drew—
I saw the solitary Ringdove there,
And "Coo, coo, coo," she cried; and "Coo, coo, coo."

[Included in *Nicolas's* edition as No. 350 of the *Rubáiyát*,
and also in *Mr. Whinfield's* translation.]

This Quatrain *Mr. Binning* found, among several of *Háfiz* and others, inscribed by some stray hand among the ruins of *Persepolis*. The Ringdove's ancient *Pehlevi* *Coo, Coo, Coo*, signifies also in Persian "*Where? Where? Where?*" In *Attár's* "Bird-parliament" she is reproved by the Leader of the Birds for sitting still, and for ever harping on that one note of lamentation for her lost *Yúsuf*.

Apropos of *Omar's* Red Roses in Stanza xix, I am reminded of an old English Superstition, that our Anem-

one Pulsatilla, or purple "Pasque Flower," (which grows plentifully about the Fleam Dyke, near Cambridge,) grows only where Danish Blood has been spilt.

(XXI.) A thousand years to each Planet.

(XXXI.) Saturn, Lord of the Seventh Heaven.

(XXXII.) ME-AND-THEE: some dividual Existence or Personality distinct from the Whole.

(XXXVII.) One of the Persian Poets—Attár, I think—has a pretty story about this. A thirsty Traveller dips his hand into a Spring of Water to drink from. By-and-by comes another who draws up and drinks from an earthen bowl, and then departs, leaving his Bowl behind him. The first Traveller takes it up for another draught; but is surprised to find that the same Water which had tasted sweet from his own hand tastes bitter from the earthen Bowl. But a Voice—from Heaven, I think—tells him the clay from which the Bowl is made was once *Man*; and, into whatever shape renew'd, can never lose the bitter flavour of Mortality.

(XXXIX.) The custom of throwing a little Wine on the ground before drinking still continues in Persia, and perhaps generally in the East. Mons. Nicolas considers it "un signe de libéralité, et en même temps un avertissement que le buveur doit vider sa coupe jusqu'à la dernière goutte." Is it not more likely an ancient Superstition; a Libation to propitiate Earth, or make her an Accomplice in the illicit Revel? Or, perhaps, to divert the Jealous Eye by some sacrifice of superfluity, as with the Ancients of the West? With Omar we see something more is signified; the precious Liquor is not lost, but sinks into the ground to refresh the dust of some poor Wine-worshipper foregone.

Thus Háfiz, copying Omar in so many ways: "When thou drinkest Wine pour a draught on the ground. Wherefore fear the Sin which brings to another Gain?"

(XLIII.) According to one beautiful Oriental Legend, Azräel accomplishes his mission by holding to the nostril an Apple from the Tree of Life.

This, and the two following Stanzas would have been withdrawn, as somewhat *de trop*, from the Text, but for advice which I least like to disregard.

(LI.) From Máh to Máhi; from Fish to Moon.

(LVI.) A Jest, of course, at his Studies. A curious mathematical Quatrain of Omar's has been pointed out to me; the more curious because almost exactly parallel'd by some Verses of Doctor Donne's, that are quoted in Izaak Walton's Lives! Here is Omar: "You and I are the image of a pair of compasses; though we have two heads (sc. our *feet*) we have one body; when we have fixed the centre for our circle, we bring our heads (sc. *feet*) together at the end." Dr. Donne:

If we be two, we two are so
As stiff twin-compasses are two;
Thy Soul, the fixt foot, makes no show
To move, but does if the other do.

And though thine in the centre sit,
Yet when my other far does roam,
Thine leans and hearkens after it,
And grows erect as mine comes home.

Such thou must be to me, who must
Like the other foot obliquely run;
Thy firmness makes my circle just,
And me to end where I begun.

(LIX.) The Seventy-two Religions supposed to divide the World, *including* Islamism, as some think: but others not.

(LX.) Alluding to Sultan Mahmúd's Conquest of India and its dark people.

(LXVIII.) *Fánúsi khiyál*, a Magic-lanthorn still used in India; the cylindrical Interior being painted with various Figures, and so lightly poised and ventilated as to revolve round the lighted Candle within.

(LXX.) A very mysterious Line in the Original:

O dánad O dánad O dánad O —

breaking off something like our Wood-pigeon's Note, which she is said to take up just where she left off.

(LXXV.) Parwín and Mushtarí — The Pleiads and Jupiter.

(LXXXVII.) This Relation of Pot and Potter to Man and his Maker figures far and wide in the Literature of the World, from the time of the Hebrew Prophets to the present; when it may finally take the name of "Pot theism," by which Mr. Carlyle ridiculed Sterling's "Panththeism." *My* Sheikh, whose knowledge flows in from all quarters, writes to me —

"Apropos of old Omar's Pots, did I ever tell you the sentence I found in 'Bishop Pearson on the Creed'? 'Thus are we wholly at the disposal of His will, and our present and future condition framed and ordered by His free, but wise and just, decrees. *Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?*' (Rom. ix. 21.) And can that earth-artificer have a freer power over his *brother potsherd* (both being made of the same metal), than God hath over him, who, by the strange fecundity of His omnipotent power, first made the clay out of nothing, and then him out of that?"

And again — from a very different quarter — "I had to refer the other day to Aristophanes, and came by

chance on a curious Speaking-pot story in the *Vespæ*, which I had quite forgotten.

Φύλοκλέων. Ἄκουε, μὴ φεῦγ· ἐν Σοβάρει γυνή ποτε 1.1435
κατέαξ' ἐχίνον.

Κατίγγορος. Ταῦτ' ἐγὼ μαρτόρομαι.

Φι. Ὀδχίνος οὖν ἔχων τιν' ἐπεμαρτόρατο·
Εἴθ' ἢ Σοβαρίτις εἶπεν, Εἰ ναὶ τὰν κόραν,
τὴν μαρτυρίαν ταύτην ἔασας, ἐν τάχει
ἐπίδεσμον ἐπρίω, νοῦν ἂν εἴχες πλείονα.

"The Pot calls a bystander to be a witness to his bad treatment. The woman says, 'If, by Proserpine, instead of all this 'testifying' (comp. Cuddie and his mother in 'Old Mortality!') you would buy yourself a rivet, it would show more sense in you!' The Scholiast explains *echinus* as ἄγρος τι ἐκ κεράμου."

One more illustration for the oddity's sake from the "Autobiography of a Cornish Rector," by the late James Hamley Tregenna. 1871.

"There was one odd Fellow in our Company — he was so like a Figure in the 'Pilgrim's Progress' that Richard always called him the 'ALLEGORY,' with a long white beard — a rare Appendage in those days — and a Face the colour of which seemed to have been baked in, like the Faces one used to see on Earthenware Jugs. In our Country-dialect Earthenware is called 'Clome'; so the Boys of the Village used to shout out after him — 'Go back to the Potter, Old Clomeface, and get baked over again.' For the 'Allegory,' though shrewd enough in most things, had the reputation of being 'saiſt-baked,' i. e., of weak intellect."

(XC.) At the Close of the Fasting Month, Ramazán (which makes the Mussulman unhealthy and unamiable),

the first Glimpse of the New Moon (who rules their division of the Year) is looked for with the utmost Anxiety, and hailed with Acclamation. Then it is that the Porter's Knot may be heard — toward the *Cellar*. Omar has elsewhere a pretty Quatrain about the same Moon —

“Be of Good Cheer — the sullen Month will die,

“And a young Moon requite us by and by :

“Look how the Old one meagre, bent, and wan

“With Age and Fast, is fainting from the Sky !”

FINIS.

NOTES BY THE EDITOR,

GIVING REFERENCES FROM FITZGERALD'S RUBÁIYYÁT TO THE ORIGINALS AS PUBLISHED BY NICOLAS, PARIS, 1867, AND MR. WHINFIELD'S ENGLISH VERSION PRINTED IN 1882; WITH OCCASIONAL LITERAL RENDERINGS IN THE FORM AND METRE OF THE ORIGINALS.

The Roman numerals on the left refer to quatrains of the Rubáíyyát as published in the Fourth edition. The Arabic figures in the first column on the right refer to the Rubáíyyát as numbered in the Paris edition. The Arabic figures of the last column refer to Whinfield's translation.

- | | | |
|------|--|----------|
| (F.) | (N.) | (W.) |
| I. | This <i>rubá'iy</i> is not, in either of its forms,
found in Nicolas or in Whinfield. | |
| II. | The first in the Persian text of Nicolas. . . . | 1 Absent |

The following is a nearly exact rendering,
both of the sense and the metre—

Out from our inn, one morn, a voice came roaring—"Up!
Sots, scamps, and madmen! quit your heavy snoring! Up!
Come pour we out a measure full of wine, and drink!
Ere yet the measure's brimmed for us they're pouring up!"

- I. and II. can be compared with N. 255, W.
158; which may be rendered thus—

Lo! the dawn breaks, and the curtain of night is torn
Up! swallow thy morning cup—Why seem to mourn?
Drink wine, my heart! for the dawns will come and come
Still facing to us when our faces to earthward turn!

- III. Not in the Persian, nor in Whinfield.

(F.)	(N.)	(W.)
IV.	186	109

"The thoughtful soul to solitude retires" is
the only interpolation.

V. Not in the Persian, nor in Whinfield.		
VI. Partly original; partly agreeing with	153	94
VII. Not found in the Persian, nor in Whinfield.		
VIII.	105	73

Since, bitter or sweet, Life ends so soon, why care, Love!
When the soul from the lip takes flight, what matters it Where, Love!
Quaff wine! — yon Moon that waxes and wanes unceasing,
When you and I are gone, will still be there, Love!

IX. } Seems compounded of two Persian {	455	250
} stanzas	370	

370 of the original may be rendered thus —

See how the zephyr tears the scarf of the rose away;
The rose's beauty charms the bulbul's woes away!
Go, sit in the shade of the rose, for every rose
That springs from the earth, again to earth soon goes away!

X. Is a verbal echo of the Persian stanza, but quite different in sense.....	416	235
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The original is —

So long as thy frame of flesh and of bone shall be,
Stir not one step outside Fate's hostelry; —
Bow to no foe — e'en Rustum or Zál — thy neck,
Take from no friend a gift, though Hatim he!

XI. } Compounded of three stanzas	82	
XII. }	413	234
	448	247

82 in the original is —

In the Springtime, biding with one who is houri-fair,
And a flask of wine, if 't is to be had — somewhere
On the tillage's grassy skirt — Alack! though most
May think it a sin, I feel that my heaven is there!

(F.)

(N.) (W.)

413 in the original—

A flask of red wine, and a volume of song, together—
 Half a loaf,—just enough the ravage of Want to tether:
 Such is my wish—then, thou in the waste with me—
 Oh! sweeter were this than a monarch's crown and feather!

(A parallel is also found in No. 146 of the
 Persian, which runs thus—

He who doth here below but half a loaf possess,
 Who for his own can claim some sheltering nook's recess,
 He who to none is either lord or thrall—
 Go! tell him he enjoys the world's full happiness!)

XIII. Compounded of two stanzas, the first of { 61
 which is not in the printed text. . . . } 92 43

The Persian of N. 92, may be rendered thus—

I know not if He who kneaded my clay to man
 Belong to the host of Heaven or the Hellish clan;—
 A life mid the meadows, with Woman, and Music, and Wine,
 Heaven's *cash* is to me;— let Heaven's *credit* thy fancy trepan!

XIV. Not found in the Persian of Nicolas. 189
 XV. 156 95

This is very beautiful in Fitzgerald. The
 exact rendering of the Persian is—

Darling, ere griefs our nightly couch enfold again,
 Bid wine be brought, red sparkling as of old, again!
 —And *thou*, weak fool! think not that thou art gold:
 When buried, none will dig *thee* up from the mould again!

XVI. Not found in the Persian or in Whinfield.
 XVII. 67 34

This old inn call'd the world, that man shelters his head in,
 (Pied curtains of Dawn and of Dusk o'er it spreading;)—
 'T is the banqueting-hall many Jamshids have quitted,
 The couch many Bahráms have found their last bed in!

(F.)	(N.)	(W.)
XVIII.	69	35

Here, where Bahram oft filled his Chalice high, elate,
Now, beasts of prey the ruined palace violate;—
Like the wild ass he lassoed, the great Hunter
Lies in the noose of Huntsman Death, annihilate.

XIX.	Not in Nicolas' Persian text.....	58
XX.	.....	59 31

The verdure sweet yon rivulet's bank arraying there,
"T is the down on an angel's lip," in homely saying, there—
O tread not thereon disdainfully!—it springeth
From the dust of some tulip-cheek that lies decaying there!

XXI.	269 167
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Let not the morrow make thee, friend, down-hearted!
Draw profit of the day yet undeparted:
We 'll join, when we to-morrow leave this mansion,
The band seven thousand years ago that started!

XXII.	A very beautiful stanza which I do not find in the Persian.	
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XXIII.	348 205
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The wheel of Heaven thy death and mine is bringing, friend!
Over our lives the cloud of doom 't is flinging, friend!
Come, sit upon this turf, for little time is left
Ere fresher turf shall from our dust be springing, friend!

XXIV.	Complementary to the sense of XXIII, with an addition not in the Persian.	
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XXV.	337 198
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Myriad minds at work, of sects and creeds to learn,
The Doubtful from the Sure all puzzled to discern:
Suddenly from the Dark the crier raised a cry—
"Not this, nor that, ye fools! the path that ye must turn!"

How delicately and skilfully Fitzgerald turns
the Persian expression literally into a
common English phrase, "neither here
nor there," to which he lends new force

(F.)

(N.) (W.)

and effect! Instead of "from the dark, the Crier," Whinfield has "from behind the veil a Voice," while Fitzgerald expresses it in a fine paraphrase, "A Muezzin from the tower of Darkness."

- XXVI. Evidently from a Persian source which I cannot identify. It resembles N. 120, W. 82, which correspond to the following—

The learned, the cream of mankind, who have driven
Intellect's chariot over the heights of heaven—

Void and o'erturned, like that blue sky they trace,
Are dazed, when they to measure Thee have striven!

- XXVII. 225 143

Forth, like a hawk, from Mystery's world I fly,
Seeking escape to win from the Low to the High:
But finding none that more of it knows than I,
Out through the door I go that I entered by!

- XXVIII. Not in Nicolas 185
XXIX. } Paraphrased from the original (not
XXX. } in Nicolas) of 64

There is a hint of it in N. 42 and in W. 12,
which corresponds to N. 22. This last
may be rendered—

This life is but three days' space, and it speeds apace,
Like wind that sweeps away o'er the desert's face:
So long as it lasts, two days ne'er trouble my mind,
—The day undawned, and the day that has run its race.

- XXXI. } Neither in Nicolas { 161
XXXII. } { 203
XXXIII. A fine stanza; not in N. or in W.
XXXIV. Not in N. or W.
XXXV. Not in the Persian text of Nicolas 149

(F.)

(N.) (W.)

A similar thought is contained in N. 389, W.

223 —

Sprung from the Four, and the Seven ! I see that never
 The Four and the Seven respond to thy brain's endeavour—
 Drink wine ! for I tell thee, four times o'er and more,
 Return there is none ! — Once gone, thou art gone for ever !

(The four elements and the seven heavens
 from which man derives his essence.)

XXXVI.	Perhaps suggested by N. 28, W. 17.		
XXXVII.	.....	211	137
XXXVIII.	Perhaps suggested by N. 119.		
XXXIX.	.....	188	110
XL.	.....	40	
XLI.	.....	} 294 359	
XLII.	Partly altered from.....		49 28
XLIII.	Not in Nicolas		139
XLIV.	Not in Nicolas		218
XLV.	.....	80	37

A very fine and sufficiently close rendering,
 but the final "prepares it for another guest"
 contains an idea which confuses the rela-
 tions between the body and the soul. This
 is closer —

Thy body's a tent, where the Soul, like a King in quest
 Of the goal of Nought, is a momentary guest; —

He arises ; Death's *farrâsh* uproots the tent,
 And the King moves on to another stage to rest.

XLVI.	.....	} 137 90 319 190	
XLVII.	Not found in the original.		
XLVIII.	Ditto. Perhaps suggested by N. 80 and N. 214. The latter (214) may be rendered —		

(F.)

(N.) (W.)

Up! smooth-faced boy, the daybreak shines for thee:
 Brimm'd with red wine let the crystal goblet be!
 This hour is lent thee in the House of Dust:—
 Another thou may'st seek, but ne'er shalt see!

XLIX., L., LI. Not found. These three and the
 preceding one are probably founded
 on N. 365 and N. 214 blended.

LII.	.....	443	244
LIII.	.....	49	28
LIV.	Not found.		
LV.	.....	181	106

A double-sized beaker to measure my wine I 'll take;
 Two doses to match my settled design I 'll take;
 With the first, I 'll divorce me from Faith and from Reason quite,
 With the next, a new bride in the Child of the Vine I 'll take!

This is a conceit derived from the Moham-
 medan law of divorce. Similar imagery is
 used in N. 259.

LVI.	Not found. Perhaps suggested from the same source as XXXV.		
LVII.	Not found. Derived from N. 22, which is noticed under XXIX-XXX.		
LVIII.	.....	329	

A tolerably close paraphrase of the Persian
words, but conveying a totally different
 sense.

LIX.	179	105
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Only the last line differs to any considerable
 degree, and Fitzgerald has in it replaced
 the original with a superior idea. .

LX.	}	Not found.
LXI.		

(F.) (N.) (W.)

LXII. Suggested by the conceits of *cash and credit* (i.e., enjoyment of to-day, put in opposition to the ascetic holiness which waits for joy in the next world), which recur frequently in the Persian.

LXIII. Not found.

LXIV.217 141

LXV.464 116

Is not so good as the original, which is the last stanza of the Persian text as given by Nicolas.

Those who were paragons of Worth and Ken,

Whose greatness torchlike lights their fellow men,

Out of this night profound no path have traced for us;—

They've babbled dreams, then fall'n to sleep again!

LXVI. Not found.

LXVII. Altered from 90 41

LXVIII. Improved from the Persian267 165

This vault of Heaven at which we gaze astounded,

May by a painted lantern be expounded:

The light 's the Sun, the lantern is the World,

And We the figures whirling dazed around it!

LXIX.231 148

But puppets are we in Fate's puppet-show—

No figure of speech is this, but in truth 't is so!

On the draughtboard of Life we are shuffled to and fro,

Then one by one to the box of Nothing go!

LXX. Not in Nicolas 104

LXXI.216 140

Since life has, love! no true reality,

Why let its coil of cares a trouble be?

Yield thee to Fate, whatever of pain it bring:

The Pen will never unwrite its writ for thee!

LXXII. 95 45

(F.)		(N.)	(W.)
LXXIII.	} Derived from.....	216	140
LXXIV.		85	40
LXXV.		110	77
LXXVI.	Not found.		
LXXVII.	Altered considerably from.....		
		222	142

In the tavern, better with Thee my soul I share
 Than in the mosque, without Thee, uttering prayer—
 O Thou, the First and Last of all that is!
 Or doom Thou me to burn, or choose to spare.

LXXVIII.	}	99	46
LXXIX.		190	111
LXXX.		268	
LXXX.		390	

N. 99 is as follows :

When the Supreme my body made of clay,
 He well foreknew the part that I should play;
 Not without His ordainment have I sinned!
 Why would He then I burn at Judgment-day!

N. 380 contains a similar idea, and has perhaps furnished suggestion for LXXIX:—

The wayward caprices my life that have tinted
 All spring from the mould on my Being imprinted:
 Nought else and nought better my nature could be—
 I am as I came from the crucible minted!

LXXXI. Partly from the same sources as
 LXXVIII-LXXX, and partly from....375

But the original does not contain the idea of
 "Man's forgiveness give—and take!"

N. 375 may be rendered thus:

Woe! that life's work should be so vain and hollow:
 Sin in each breath and in the food we swallow!
 Black is my face that what was Bid, undone is:
 (— If done the Unbidden, ah! what then must follow!

(F.)	(N.)	(W.)
LXXXII.	} Contain in greater diffuseness the exact idea of.....	
LXXXIII.		
LXXXVII.		243 156

To a potter's shop, yestreen, I did repair;
 Two thousand dumb or chattering pots were there.
 All turned to me, and asked with speech distinct:
 "Who is 't that makes, that buys, that sells our ware?"

LXXXIV.	} Suggested by several of the <i>rubáiyát</i> .	
LXXXV.		
LXXXVI.		
LXXXVIII.		
LXXXIX.		{ 290 185 115

When Fate, at her foot, a broken wreck shall fling me,
 And when Fate's hand, a poor plucked fowl shall wring me;
 Beware, of my clay, aught else than a bowl to make,
 That the scent of the wine new life in time may bring me!

XC.	Not in the original.	
XCI.		109 76

Let wine, gay comrades, be the food I 'm fed upon;—
 These amber cheeks its ruby light be shed upon!
 Wash me in 't, when I die;— and let the trees
 Of my vineyard yield the bier that I lie dead upon!

XCII.	} Not in the original.	
XCIII.		
XCIV.		
XCV.		463 115

Since the Moon and the Star of Eve first shone on high,
 Nought has been known with ruby Wine could vie:
 Strange, that the vintners should in traffic deal!
 Better than what they sell, what could they buy!

XCVI.		128 86
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Ah! that young Life should close its volume bright away!
 Mirth's springtime green, that it should pass from sight away!
 Ah! for the Bird of Joy whose name is Youth:
 We know not when she came, nor when took flight away!

(F.)

(N.) (W.)

xcvii. Not found in the original.

xcviii. } Suggested by N. 216, 340, 457; W.

XCIX. } 140, 200, 251.

N. 340 may be rendered thus :

If I like God o'er Heaven's high fate could reign,
I'd sweep away the present Heaven's domain,
And from its ruins such a new one build
That an honest heart its wish could ever attain!

N. 457 is as follows :

I would God were this whole world's scheme renewing,
— And now! at once! that I might see it doing!
That either from His roll my name were cancelled,
Or luckier days for me from Heaven accruing!

C. } 8 2
94

8 is as follows :

Since none can be our surety for to-morrow,
Sweeten, my love, thy heart to-day from sorrow :
Drink wine, fair Moon, in wine-light, for the moon
Will come again, and miss us, many a morrow !

94.

The moon cleaves the skirt of the night—then, oh! drink Wine!
For never again will moment like this be thine.

Be gay! and remember that many and many a moon
On the surface of earth again and again will shine!

CL.192 112

Appoint ye a tryst, happy comrades, anon !
And when—as your revel in gladness comes on—
The Saki takes goblet in hand, oh ! remember,
And bless, while you drink, the poor fellow that's gone !

The following may be added, as characteristic of the spirit of Omar Khayyám :

N. 2.

Thou ! chosen one from earth's full muster-roll to me !
 Dearer than my two eyes, than even my soul to me !
 — Though nothing than life more precious we esteem,
 Yet dearer art thou, my love, a hundred-fold to me !

N. 4.

Nothing but pain and wretchedness we earn in
 This world that for a moment we sojourn in :
 We go ! — no problem solved alas ! discerning ;
 Myriad regrets within our bosoms burning !

N. 5.

O master ! grant us only this, we prithee :
Preach not ! but mutely guide to bliss, we prithee !
 “ We walk not straight ! ” — Nay, it is *thou* who squintest !
 Go, heal thy sight, and leave us in peace, we prithee :

N. 6.

Hither ! come hither, love ! my heart doth need thee ;
 Come, and expound a riddle I will read thee.
 The earthen jar bring too, — and let us drink, love !
 Ere, turned to clay, to earthenware they knead thee !

N. 7.

Wash me when dead in the juice of the vine, old friends !
 Let your funeral service be drinking and wine, old friends !
 And if you would meet me again when the Doomsday comes,
 Search the dust of the tavern, and sift from it mine, old friends !

N. 13.

Howe'er with beauty's hue and bloom endow'd I be,
 Of tulip-cheek and cypress-form though proud I be ;
 Yet know I not why the Limer chose that, here, in this
 Mint-house of clay, amid the painted crowd I be !

N. 57.

Unworthy of Hell, unfit for Heaven, I be—
God knows what clay He used when He moulded me!
Foul as a punk, ungodly as a monk,
No faith, no world, no hope of Heaven I see!

N. 88.

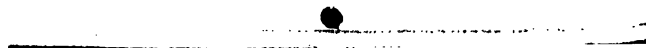
Wicked, men call me ever; yet blameless I!
Think how it is, ye Saints!— My life, ye cry,
Breaks all Heaven's laws — Good lack! I have no sin,
That needs reproach, save wenching and drink! — then, why?

N. 388.

Oh! Thou hast shattered to bits my jar of wine, my Lord!
Thou hast shut me out from the gladness that was mine, my Lord!
Thou hast spilt and scattered my wine upon the clay —
O dust in my mouth! if the drunkenness be not Thine, my Lord!

According to the testimony of an old MS., according to M. Nicolas, the third line of this stanza ought to run thus:

"I drink the wine; 't is Thou who feel'st its power —"





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